



# HISTORY OF THE **ARABS**

PHILIP K. HITTI

With a new Preface by Walid Khalidi



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HISTORY OF THE ARABS

# **HISTORY**

OF

# **THE ARABS**

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES

TO THE PRESENT

PHILIP K. HITTI

FORMERLY

PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF SEMITIC LITERATURE

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

REVISED TENTH EDITION New Preface by Walid Khalidi

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## PREFACE TO THE REVISED TENTH EDITION

This reissue of the tenth (1970) edition of Philip K. Hitti's  
monumental History of the Arabs will be welcomed by all his  
many admirers and by teachers and students of the Arab  
and Muslim worlds wherever they may be.

The republication of this great work in the second year of the twenty-first century is also supremely timely for the general English-speaking public in Europe and the United States. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the cold war Western interest has increasingly focused on Islam. Facile theories of the so-called Clash of Civilizations have abounded. Fundamentalism, in all world religions is on the rise. Muslim minorities and others of Arab origin have grown in number in many European countries and in North America. Western dependence on oil in Arab and Muslim countries continues for the foreseeable future.

Regional conflicts in Muslim or Arab countries have brought about in recent years massive Western military intervention in Lebanon, Bosnia, Somalia, Iraq, Kosovo and Afghanistan. Despite peace treaties between Israel and both Jordan and Egypt and the internationally sponsored Madrid peace conference of 1991, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict rages unabated in the Holy Land.

The horrendous events of 11 September in New York and Washington have unleashed a US-led global war against terrorism rightly or wrongly seen by many to have an essentially Muslim or Arab cultural provenance.

Concurrently the level of understanding by the general Western public of Arab and Muslim history and civilization remains at a dismally inadequate level. This is manifested on an almost daily basis in the output of the audio-visual media and is often reflected in the glib generalizations of even leading Western pundits and senior officials. In short, never before has there been a greater need in the Western world and particularly in the United States - its paramount leader - for an authoritative and scholarly work on the Arab and Muslim peoples to tell the story as it is without passion or partisanship. Of all the many works that I know, I can think of no one other than Philip K. Hitti's

History of the Arabs to fulfil this imperative educational purpose.

## vi PREFACE TO THE TENTH REVISED EDITION

It was Mr Daniel Macmillan who, in 1927, first commissioned Hitti to write his History. The author laboured for ten years to accomplish the task. Already in 1937 the first edition was a tour de force of scholarship, the fruit of years of teaching and study at Columbia University, the American University of Beirut and Princeton University. Since 1937 nine editions have appeared, the last in 1970. During this period the History was translated into many languages including Arabic, Spanish, Urdu, Italian, Serbo-Croat and Polish.

Each edition elicited tens of review articles by leading experts in their countries of origin. Corrections, suggestions and criticisms came from colleagues and research assistants working under the author. The work was further enriched by ongoing class discussions with generations of students, since it formed the basis of the author's own university course offerings. Simultaneously he kept a watchful eye on new publications in various languages on topics touched upon in his History as well as on the latest edited versions of medieval Arabic texts. Meanwhile the author travelled at least once a year, visiting or revisiting at one time or another every Arab country covered in his work and discussing its contents with countless Arab scholars, teachers and students. The History was thus essentially a work in progress for more than four decades, incorporating the rich harvest of all this accumulated input - a unique depository of facts and insights about the Arabs and Islam.

A History of the Arabs lays down in some 700 pages a solid infrastructure of knowledge altogether indispensable for

understanding developments that followed. It spans more than a millennium of history from pre-Islamic times - pagan, Judaic Christian (the Arabs were Christians before they were Muslim) - until the Ottoman Turkish conquest of the Arab world in the early sixteenth century. Five of the six parts, which constitute the bulk (more than 90 per cent) of the History cover this period. Part VI is a bird's-eye view, in broad brush strokes in some 50 pages, of developments political, social and cultural in the Arab world from the Ottoman conquest until the time of publication in 1970. Remarkable and enlightening as Part VI is, the core of the History is parts I to V.

In these principal components of the History the story is told of the origins of the Arabs, the emergence of Muhammad the Arabian Prophet and the rise of Islam, and the early Righteous Caliphate. The History then traces the breathtaking spread of Islam within

## PREFACE TO THE TENTH REVISED EDITION      vii

decades of its foundation across North Africa, into the Iberian Peninsula, across the Pyrenees and up to Poitiers in France in the West, to Byzantine Anatolia in the North and to Western China in the East.

The History chronicles the rise and fall of the two central Arab caliphates, the Umayyad (661—750) and the Abbasid (750—1258) based in Damascus and Baghdad respectively - the latter until its capital was overrun and destroyed by the Mongol hordes under Hulagu. It tells the story of the efflorescence of Arab civilization and of its immense contributions to the European Renaissance. It describes the centrifugal forces tearing at imperial unity, the succession of provincial dynasties in Egypt, Spain and elsewhere, and the penetration of the metropolitan Arab elite by non-Arab

Muslim elements, Persian, Turkic, Berber and Mamluk, and its resultant fragmentation.

The History is mindful of the continuous cultural cross-fertilization process between East and West in philosophy, science, trade, the arts and architecture even during periods of military confrontation, as during the Crusades (1097-1291) and the Christian Reconquista in Spain (1085-1492). It is equally mindful of the major contributions to Arab and Muslim civilization by Jews, Christian Arabs, and non-Arab Muslim peoples. The History never flinches from a “warts and all” approach and is clear-eyed about sectarian schisms and other internal causes of decline and decay. It never loses sight of the overall picture and brilliantly subsumes an extraordinary mass of details within an easily flowing, often witty, narrative enlivened by direct quotes from scores of original texts: poems, travelogues, speeches and decrees. Political, dynastic and military developments never overshadow social, economic, administrative and intellectual ones: of the fifty-two chapters that make up the entire corpus, fully twenty are exclusively set aside to the latter.

The successive chapters of the History are enriched by some 70 illustrations of buildings, coins, portraits of individuals and objets d'art by twenty-one maps and twenty-five dynastic tables. Innumerable subheadings in the margins accompany the text for easier reference. More than 2,000 footnotes cite the primary medieval Arabic sources - a hallmark of this work - as well as the best products of Western orientalism. A voluminous 62-page index of places, personal names and Arabic terms is an invaluable guide to this treasure trove.

Philip K. Hitti, by origin a Maronite Christian from Lebanon, was born in 1886 in the village of Shemlan overlooking Beirut, some five miles away as the crow flies. He received his BA from the American University of Beirut and his Ph.D. from Columbia University, New York. In 1927, when commissioned by Daniel Macmillan to write the History, he was assistant professor of Semitic literature at Princeton University, New Jersey, where he became professor of Semitic literature and chairman of the department of oriental languages and literature until his retirement in 1954. He was also visiting professor at the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil and Harvard University. In 1940 his name was inscribed at New York World's Fair among American citizens of foreign birth who made "notable contributions" to American democracy. In 1966, he was awarded a Litt.D. by Princeton University. He died in Princeton in 1978.

It is a great honour and privilege for me to have been asked to write this preface. Let us hope that the reprinting in these difficult times of Philip K. Hitti's History of the Arabs will serve the purpose of bridge building between the Western and Arab worlds, which was the lifelong ambition of a foremost historian of the Arab world and a preeminent scholar of the United States.

Walid Khalidi

Former Senior Fellow, Center of

Middle East Studies, Harvard University Fellow, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Cambridge, Massachusetts

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## PREFACE TO THE TENTH EDITION

THE year 1970 marks the thirty-third anniversary of the publication of *A Short History of the Arabs* and witnesses its tenth edition, the initiative for its writing was taken by Mr. Daniel Macmillan who, as early as 1927, wrote to the author suggesting a book *Co-K?aq? to ^meer AH, A Short History of the Saracens*, first published by Macmillan and Co. in 1900. The occurrence of the word Saracens in the title left no doubt about the obsolete character of the work.

In my youthful enthusiasm I signed a contract in 1927 agreeing to deliver the manuscript in three years. (A representative of Macmillan, who was then touring the Arab world, suggested an Arabic version of the book and I thought I could do that in a couple of subsequent years.) When the book at last appeared in 1937, the New York publisher (before St. Martin's Press) asked my opinion as to the number of copies to be imported and when I offhand suggested a hundred, he shot back, "Who is going to buy that many?"

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As a matter of fact the American public, even at its educated level, was then almost illiterate so far as the Arabs and Moslems were concerned. The rare courses in this field were limited to a few graduate schools and offered as subsidiary to Semitic studies and as contributory to philology or linguistics. Nowhere were such courses given for their own sake or as a key to further investigation of Arab history, Islam and Islamic culture. This was substantially the situation until the second World War. It was not until then that the American government and public were awakened to the fact that here are millions of Moslems and tens of thousands of Arabs with whom they had to deal and of whom they should have some understanding.



The demand, subsequent to the appearance of the first English edition, for translation rights—not only into Arabic but into varied Asian and European languages—left no doubt about the timeliness of the work and its capacity to meet the need. It is gratifying to note that since the publication of the ninth edition four years ago new versions have appeared in Italian, Serbo-Croat and Polish.

In this edition, as in earlier ones, an effort was made to take into consideration the results of new researches, to update the material in text and footnote, and to plug that seemingly inexhaustible supply of errors—otherwise called typographical. About sixty sheets, including four maps, have been thus treated.

P. K. H.

January, 1970

## **PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION**

This is a modest attempt to tell the story of the Arabians and the Arabic-speaking peoples from the earliest times to the Ottoman conquest of the early sixteenth century. It represents many years of study and teaching at Columbia University, the American University of Beirut and Princeton University, and is designed to meet the needs of the student as well as the cultivated layman. The field it covers, however, is so extensive that the author cannot claim to have carried his independent researches into every part of it. He therefore had to appropriate in places the results of the investigation of other scholars in the East and in the West, to whom his indebtedness would have been more apparent had the selected bibliographies appended to each chapter in the manuscript appeared in the printed book.

While in preparation certain chapters of the book were submitted to various scholars for their criticism. Among those who made a distinct contribution were Professor A. T. Olmstead, of the University of Chicago; Dr. Walter L. Wright, Jr., now president of Robert College, Istanbul; Dr. Costi Zurayq, of the American University of Beirut, Lebanon; and two of my colleagues, Professor Henry L. Savage and Professor Albert Elsasser, of the Department of English.

For several years the manuscript was made the basis of a graduate course, and it benefited considerably from suggestions and criticisms offered by my students. Among these special mention should be made of George C. Miles, now of Rayy, Persia; Butrus 'Abd-al-Malik, of Assiut College, Egypt; Edward J. Jurji, of Baghdad; Harold W. Glidden; Richard F. S. Starr; and Nabih A. Faris, of Jerusalem. Dr. Faris rendered further service by collaborating in sketching the maps, reading the proofs and compiling the index.

To all these gentlemen, as well as to my wife, who co-operated in typewriting the manuscript and proposed several improvements, my hearty thanks are due.

Cori,ear Bay Club Lake Champlain, New York

P. K. H.

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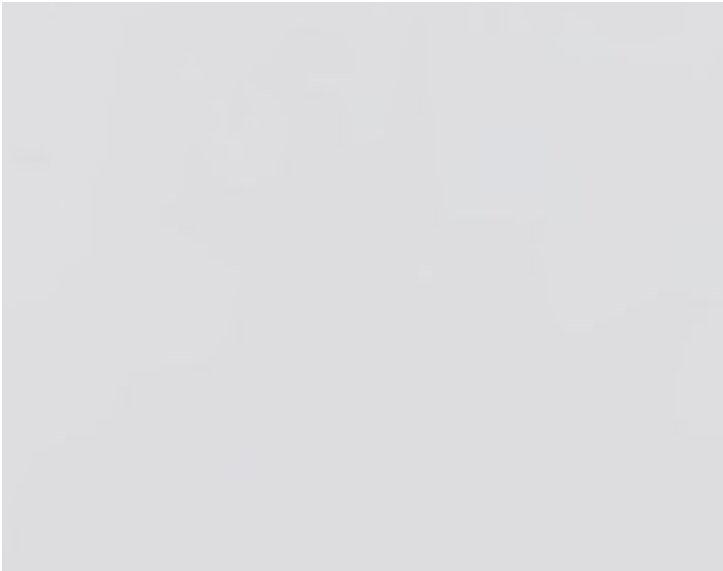
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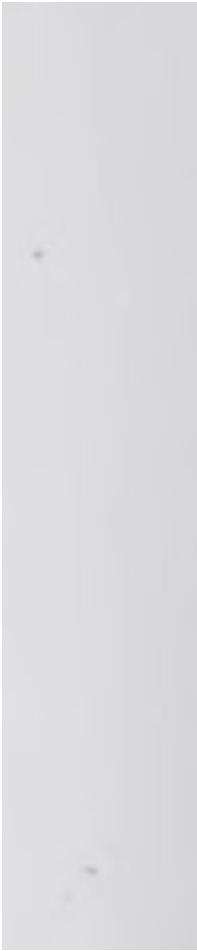




## PART 1

### THE PRE-ISLAMIC AGE







## CHAPTER I

### THE ARABS AS SEMITES

#### ARABIA THE CRADLE OF THE SEMITIC RACE

Of all the lands comparable to Arabia in size, and of all the peoples approaching the Arabs in historical interest and importance, no country and no nationality have perhaps received so little consideration and study in modern times as have Arabia and the Arabs

Claim« on our nterest

Here is a country that is about one-fourth the area of Europe, one-third the size of the United States of America, yet what is known about it is out of all proportion to what is unknown. We are beginning to know more, comparatively speaking, about the Arctic and Antarctic regions than we do about most of Arabia.

As the probable cradle of the Semitic family the Arabian peninsula nursed those peoples who later migrated into the Fertile Crescent and subsequently became the Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Phoenicians and the Hebrews of history. As the plausible fount of pure Semitism, the sandy soil of the peninsula is the place wherein the rudimentary elements of Judaism, and consequently of Christianity—together with the origin of those traits which later developed into the well-delineated Semitic character—should be sought for. In medieval times Arabia gave birth to a people who conquered most of the then civilized world, and to a religion—Islam—which still claims the adherence ot some tour hundred and fifty millions ot people representing nearly all the races and many different climes. Every eighth person in our world

today is a follower of Muhammad, and the Moslem call to prayer rings out through most of the twenty-four hours of the day, encircling the larger portion of the globe in its warm belt.

Around the name of the Arabs gleams that halo which belongs to the world-conquerors. Within a century after their rise this people became the masters of an empire extending from the shores of the Atlantic Ocean to the confines of China, an empire

3

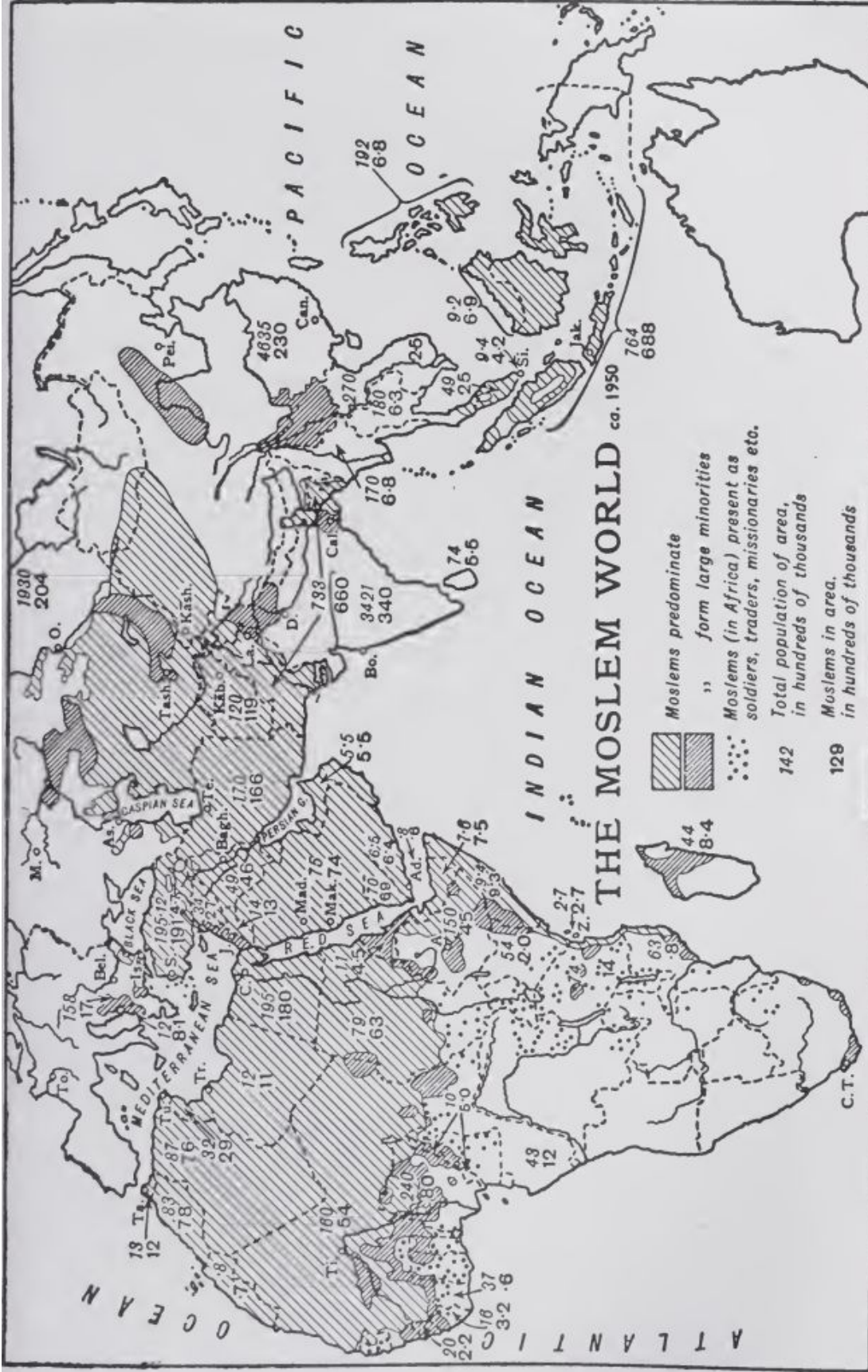
greater than that of Rome at its zenith. In this period of unprecedented expansion they “assimilated to their creed, speech, and even physical type, more aliens than any stock before or since, not excepting the Hellenic, the Roman, the Anglo-Saxon, or the Russian”.<sup>1</sup>

It was not only an empire that the Arabs built, but a culture as well. Heirs of the ancient civilization that flourished on the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates, in the land of the Nile and on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, they likewise absorbed and assimilated the main features of the Greco-Roman culture, and subsequently acted as a medium for transmitting to medieval Europe many of those intellectual influences which ultimately resulted in the awakening of the Western world and in setting it on the road towards its modern renaissance. No people in the Middle Ages contributed to human progress so much as did the Arabians and the Arabic-speaking peoples.<sup>2</sup>

The religion of the Arabians, after Judaism and Christianity, is the third and latest monotheistic religion. Historically it is an offshoot of these other two, and of all faiths it comes nearest to being their next of kin. All three are the product

of one spiritual life, the Semitic life. A faithful Moslem could with but few scruples subscribe to most of the tenets of Christian belief. Islam has been and still is a living force from Morocco to Indonesia and a way of life to millions of the human race.

The Arabic language today is the medium of daily expression for some hundred million people. For many centuries in the Middle Ages it was the language of learning and culture and progressive thought throughout the civilized world. Between the ninth and the twelfth centuries more works, philosophical, medical, historical, religious, astronomical and geographical, were produced through the medium of Arabic than through any other tongue. The languages of Western Europe still bear the impress of its influence in the form of numerous loan-words. Its alphabet, next to the Latin, is the most widely used system in the world. It is the one employed by Persian, Afghan, Urdu, and a number of Turkish, Berber and Malayan languages.



The Babylonians, the Chaldaeans, the Hittites, the Phoenicians were, but are no more. The Arabians and the Arabic-speaking peoples were and remain. They stand today as they stood in the past in a most strategic geographical position astride one of the greatest arteries of world trade. Currently their international position is importantly medial in the tug of . cold war between East and West. In their soil are treasured the world's greatest stores of liquid energy, oil, first discovered in 1932. Since World War I these peoples have been nationally aroused and have achieved full independence. For the first time since the rise of Islam most of the Arabian peninsula has been consolidated under one rule, the Su'udi. Egypt, after experiencing a period of monarchy, declared in 1952 in favour of the republican form. In this it followed Syria—whose capital Damascus was once the seat of the glorious Umayyad empire—which seven years earlier had freed itself from the French mandate. Al-Traq, after installing a king in Baghdad, kingless since 'Abbasid days, abolished the monarchy and declared itself a republic. Lebanon was the first to adopt the republican form. Transjordan and a part of Palestine developed in 1949 into the Hashimite Kingdom of Jordan. In North Africa Morocco, Tunisia, Mauritania and Algeria shook off the French and Libya the Italian tutelage in the 1950s and 1960s. The phoenix, a bird of Araby, is rising again.

### Modern explorations

Classical Europe knew southern Arabia: Herodotus, among others, mentions its western coast. The chief interest of the Greeks and the Romans lay in the fact that the South Arabians inhabited the frankincense and spice land and acted as a connecting link with the markets of India and Somaliland. But late medieval and early modern Europe forgot Arabia in great part and had in recent times to



discover it anew. The pioneers were adventurers, Christian missionaries, traders, French and British officers attached to the Egyptian expeditions between 1811 and 1836, political emissaries and scientific explorers.

The first modern scholar to describe the land was Carsten Niebuhr, a member of a scientific expedition sent by the king of Denmark in 1761. Al-Yaman in South Arabia, the part best known to classical Europe, was the first to be rediscovered. The north-western part of the peninsula, centring in al-Hijaz, though geographically nearer to Europe, was left to the end. Down to the present day no more than a dozen Europeans of those who left records have succeeded in penetrating into this religiously-forbidden area.

In 1812 Johann Ludwig Burckhardt, a Swiss, discovered Petra for the learned world, and under the name Ibrâhîm ibn-'Abdullâh visited Makkah and al-Madinah. His description of the places visited has hardly since been improved upon. Burckhardt's Moslem tomb stands today in the great cemetery of Cairo. The only other European until 1925 who had a chance to study Makkah in its normal life was Professor Snouck Hur-gronje of Leyden, who was there in 1885-6. In 1845 a young Finno-Swedish scholar, George Augustus Wallin, paid a visit to Najd for linguistic study. Napoleon III, after withdrawing his troops from Lebanon in 1861, sought a new sphere of influence in central Arabia and thereinto sent, two years later, an Englishman, William Gifford Palgrave, who was a Jew by birth and who at that time, as a member of the Jesuit order, was stationed at Zahlah, Lebanon. Palgrave claimed that he covered more ground south of Najd than he actually did. In 1853 Sir Richard F. Burton, famous as the translator of *The Arabian Nights*, visited the holy cities as a pilgrim—al-Hajj 'Abdullah. Lady Anne Blunt, one of two European women to penetrate north Arabia, reached (1879) Najd on several odd missions,

including the quest of Arabian horses. In 1875 an Englishman, Charles M. Doughty, traversed northern Arabia as a “Nasrâny” (Christian) and “Engleisy”. His record of the journey, *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, has become a classic of English literature. T. E. Lawrence’s *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* has been greeted as a work of special merit in the literature of the first World War. Among the latest explorers may be mentioned a Czechoslovak, Alois Musil, who specialized on the northern territory; and among the recent travellers, the Lebanese-American Ameen Rihani, who interviewed all the kings of the peninsula, and Eldon Rutter, who visited Makkah and al-Madinah in 1925-6. A special reference should be made to the brave feat of Bertram Thomas, the young English orientalist, who in January 1931 crossed for the first time the great southern desert of Arabia, al-Rab' al Khali, and bared one of the largest blank spots left on the world’s map. His adventure was matched by H. St.J B. Philby, al-Hâjj ‘Abdullah, who, starting at al-Hufûf near the Persian Gulf on January 7, 1932, crossed al-Rab' al-Khâli from east to west in ninety days.

The Himyarite inscriptions which afforded us the first opportunity to hear what the South Arabians had to say about themselves were discovered by a Frenchman disguised as a Jewish beggar from Jerusalem, Joseph Halevy, 1869-70, and by an Austrian Jew, Eduard Glaser, between 1882 and 1894 (<sup>see</sup> below, p. 51). The copious but late and not fully authentic Islamic literature in Arabic, the sporadic Greek and Latin references and the few hieroglyphic and cuneiform statements in the annals of the Pharaohs and the kings of Assyro-Babylonia, supplemented by the recently deciphered Himyarite material and by the reports of the modern travellers and explorers, constitute our chief sources of knowledge of ancient Arabia.

Ethnic relationship: the Semites

Of the two surviving representatives of the Semitic people, the Arabians, in a larger measure than the Jews, have preserved the characteristic physical features and mental traits of the family. Their language, though the youngest among the Semitic group from the point of view of literature, has, nevertheless, conserved more of the peculiarities of the mother Semitic tongue—including the inflection—than the Hebrew and its other sister languages. It therefore affords the best key for the study of the Semitic languages. Islam, too, in its original form is the logical perfection of Semitic religion. In Europe and America the word “Semite” has come to possess a primarily Jewish connotation, and that on account of the wide dispersion of the Jews in these continents. The “Semitic features” often referred to, including the prominent nose, are not Semitic at all. They are exactly the characteristics which differentiate the Jew from the Semitic type and evidently represent an acquisition from early intermarriages between the Hittite-Hurrians and the Hebrews.<sup>1</sup>

The reasons which make the Arabian Arabs, particularly the nomads, the best representatives of the Semitic family biologically, psychologically, socially and linguistically should be sought in their geographical isolation and in the monotonous uniformity of desert life. Ethnic purity is a reward of the most ungrateful and isolated environment, such as central Arabia affords. The Arabians call their habitat Jazirat al- Arab, “the Island of the Arabs”, and an island it is, surrounded by water on three sides

<sup>1</sup> George A. Barton, *Semitic and Hamitic Origins* (Philadelphia, 1934), pp. 85-7; Ignace J. Gelb, *Hurrians and Subarians* (Chicago, 1944), pp. 69-70.

and by sand on the fourth. This “island” furnishes an almost unique example of uninterrupted relationship between

populace and soil. If any immigrations have ever taken place thereinto resulting in successive waves of settlers ousting or submerging one another—as in the case of India, Greece, Italy, England and the United States—history has left us no record thereof. Nor do we know of any invader who succeeded in penetrating the sandy barriers and establishing a permanent foothold in this land. The people of Arabia have remained virtually the same throughout all the recorded ages.<sup>1</sup>

The term Semite comes from Shem in the Old Testament (Gen. 10 : 1) through the Latin of the Vulgate. The traditional explanation that the so-called Semites are descended from the eldest son of Noah, and therefore racially homogeneous, is no longer accepted. Who are the Semites then?

If we consult a linguistic map of Western Asia we find Syria, Palestine, Arabia proper and al-Traḡ populated at the present time by Arabic-speaking peoples. If we then review our ancient history we remember that beginning with the middle of the fourth millennium before our era the Babylonians (first called Akkadians after their capital Akkadu, Agade), the Assyrians and later the Chaldaeans occupied the Tigris-Euphrates valley; after 2500 B.C. the Amorites and Canaanites (including the Phoenicians) populated Syria; and about 1500 B.C. the Aramaeans settled in Syria and the Hebrews in Palestine. Down to the nineteenth century the medieval and modern world did not realize that all these peoples were closely related. With the decipherment of the cuneiform writing in the middle of the nineteenth century and the comparative study of the Assyro-Babylonian, Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic and Ethiopic tongues it was found that those languages had striking points of similarity and were therefore cognates. In the case of each one of these languages the verbal stem is

triconsonantal; the tense has only two forms, perfect and imperfect; the conjugation of the verb follows the same model. The elements of the vocabulary, including the personal pronouns, nouns denoting blood-kinship, numbers and certain names of members of the body, are almost alike. A scrutiny of the social institutions and religious beliefs and a comparison of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bertram Thomas in *The Near East and India* (London, Nov. 1, 1928), pp. 516-19; C. Rathjens in *Journal asiatique*, ccxv. No. 1 (1929), pp. 141-55. the physical features of the peoples who spoke these languages have revealed likewise impressive points of resemblance. The linguistic kinship is, therefore, but a manifestation of a well-marked general unity of type. This type was characterized by deep religious instinct, vivid imagination, pronounced individuality and marked ferocity. The inference is inescapable: the ancestors of these various peoples—Babylonians, Assyrians, Chaldaeans, Amorites, Aramaeans, Phoenicians, Hebrews, Arabians and Abyssinians—before they became thus differentiated must have lived at some time in the same place as one people.

### Arabia, the cradle of the Semites

Where was the original home of this people? Different hypotheses have been worked out by various scholars. There are those who, considering the broad ethnic relationship between Semites and Hamites, hold that eastern Africa was the original home; others, influenced by Old Testament traditions, maintain that Mesopotamia provided the first abode; but the arguments in favour of the Arabian peninsula, considered in their cumulative effect, seem most plausible. The Mesopotamian theory is vitiated by the fact that it assumes passage of people from an agricultural stage of development on the banks of a river to a nomadic

stage, which is the reverse of the sociological law in historic times. The African theory raises more questions than it answers.

The surface of Arabia is mostly desert with a narrow margin of habitable land round the periphery. The sea encircles this periphery. When the population increases beyond the capacity of the land to support it the surplus must seek elbow room. But this surplus cannot expand inward because of the desert, nor outward on account of the sea—a barrier which in those days was well-nigh impassable. The overpopulation would then find one route open before it on the western coast of the peninsula leading northward and forking at the Sinaitic peninsula to the fertile valley of the Nile. Around 3500 B.C. a Semitic migration followed this route, or took the east African route northward, planted itself on top of the earlier Hamitic population of Egypt and the amalgamation produced the Egyptians of history. These are the Egyptians who laid down so many of the basic elements in our civilization. It was they who first built stone structures and developed a solar calendar. At about the same time a parallel migration followed the eastern route northward and struck root

in the Tigro-Euphrates valley, already populated by a highly civilized community, the Sumerians.<sup>1</sup> The Semites entered the valley as barbarian nomads, but learned from the Sumerians, the originators of the Euphratean civilization, how to build and live in homes, how to irrigate the land and above all how to write. The Sumerians were a non-Semitic people. The admixture of the two races here gave us the Babylonians, who share with the Egyptians the honour of laying down the fundamentals of our cultural heritage. Among other innovations, the Babylonians bequeathed to us the arch and the vault (probably of Sumerian origin), the wheeled cart and a system of weights and measures.

About the middle of the third millennium before Christ another Semitic migration brought the Amorites into the Fertile Crescent. The component elements of the Amorites included the Canaanites (who occupied western Syria and Palestine after 2500 B.C.) and the coastal people called by the Greeks Phoenicians. These Phoenicians were the first people to popularize an exclusively alphabetic system of writing, comprising twenty-two signs, properly styled the greatest invention of mankind (cf. below, p. 71).

Between 1500 and 1200 B.C. the Hebrews made their way into southern Syria, Palestine, and the Aramaeans (Syrians) into the north, particularly Coele-Syria.<sup>2</sup> The Hebrews, before any other people, revealed to the world the clear idea of one God, and their 'monotheism became the origin of Christian and Moslem belief.

About 500 B.C. the Nabataeans established themselves northeast of the Sinaitic peninsula. The height to which their civilization later attained under Roman influence may be gauged by the magnificent ruins of their rock-hewn capital, Petra.

The seventh century of our era saw a new and final migration under the banner of Islam, in the course of which the dam broke and not only the lands of the Fertile Crescent, the region forming an arc between the head of the Persian Gulf and the southeast corner of the Mediterranean Sea, but even Egypt, northern Africa, Spain, Persia and parts of central Asia were flooded.<sup>3</sup>

This last migration, which took place within the full light of history, is cited as an historical argument by the supporters of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. C. Leonard Woolley, *The Sumerians* (Oxford, 1929), pp. 5-6.

<sup>1</sup> Hollow Syria, modern al-Biqa', between the two Lebanons.

<sup>8</sup> Hugo Winckler, *The History of Babylonia and Assyria*, tr. James A. Craig (New York, 1907), pp. 18-22.

the theory of Arabia as the Semitic home; they further reinforce their case by the observation that the Arabians have preserved the Semitic traits more purely and have manifested them more distinctly than any other members of that racial group, and that their language is most nearly akin to what scholars believe the primitive form of Semitic speech to have been.

A comparative examination of the dates quoted above suggested to certain Semitists the notion that in recurrent cycles of approximately one thousand years Arabia, like a mighty reservoir, became populated to the point where overflow was inevitable. These same scholars would speak of the migrations in terms of "waves". It is more likely, however, that these Semitic movements partook in their initial stages more of the nature of the European migrations into the New World: a few persons would start moving, others would follow, then many more would go, until a general popular interest was aroused in the idea of going.

This transplantation en masse or in bands of human groups from a pastoral desert region to an agricultural territory constitutes a common phenomenon in the Near East and provides an important clue to the understanding of its long and checkered history. The process by which a more or less migratory people imposes itself upon a people which has become rooted in the soil usually results in the invaders assimilating to some degree the main features of the



previously existing civilization and in infusing a certain amount of its blood, but hardly ever in the extermination of the indigenous population. This is exactly what happened in the ancient Near East, whose history is to a certain extent a struggle between the sedentary population already domiciled in the Fertile Crescent and the nomadic Arabians trying to dispossess them. For immigration and colonization are, as has been well said, an attenuated form of invasion.

It should be noted in connection with these migrations that in almost every case the Semitic tongue survived. This is a determining factor. If in Mesopotamia, for example, the agglutinative Sumerian language had survived it would have been difficult for us to classify the people of the valley as Semitic. In the case of the ancient Egyptians a Semito-Hamitic language evolved, and we cannot very well include the Egyptians among the Semites. The term "Semite", therefore, has more linguistic than ethnological implication, and the Assyro-Babylonian, Aramaic, Hebrew, Phoenician, South Arabic, Ethiopic and Arabic languages should be viewed as dialects developing out of one common tongue, the Ursemitisch. A parallel may be found in the case of the Romance languages in their relation to Latin, with the exception that some form of Latin has survived, in literature at least, to the present day, whereas the Semitic archetype, only a spoken language, has entirely passed away, though its general character may be inferred from whatever points are found common to its surviving daughters.

Accepting Arabia—Najd or al-Yaman—as the homeland and distributing centre of the Semitic peoples does not preclude the possibility of their having once before, at a very early date, constituted with another member of the white race, the Hamites, one community somewhere in eastern Africa; it was from this community that those who were later termed

Semites crossed over into the Arabian peninsula, possibly at Bab al-Mandab.<sup>1</sup> This would make Africa the probable Semito-Hamitic home and Arabia the cradle of the Semitic people and the centre of their distribution. The Fertile Crescent was the scene of the Semitic civilization.

<sup>1</sup> Barton, p. 27

## CHAPTER II

### The setting of the stage

Arabia is the south-western peninsula of Asia, the largest peninsula on the map. Its area of 1,027,000 square miles holds an estimated population of only fourteen millions. Su'udi Arabia, with an area (exclusive of al-Rab' al-Khali) of 597,000 square miles, claims some seven millions; al-Yaman five millions; al-Kuwayt, Qatar, the crucial shaykhdoms, 'Uman and Masqat, Aden and the Aden protectorate the rest. Geologists tell us that the land once formed the natural continuation of the Sahara (now separated from it by the rift of the Nile valley and the great chasm of the Red Sea) and of the sandy belt which traverses Asia through central Persia and the Gobi Desert. In earlier times the Atlantic westerlies, which now water the highlands of Syria-Palestine, must have reached Arabia undrained, and during a part of the Ice Age these same desert lands must have been pre-eminently habitable grasslands. Since the ice sheet never extended south of the great mountains in Asia Minor, Arabia was never made uninhabitable by glaciation. Its deep, dry wadi beds still bear witness to the erosive powers of the rainwater that once flowed through them. The northern boundary is ill-defined, but may be considered an imaginary line drawn due east from the head of the Gulf of al-<sup>c</sup>Aqabah in the Red Sea to the Euphrates. Geologically, indeed, the whole Syro-Mesopotamian desert is a part of Arabia.

The peninsula slopes away from the west to the Persian Gulf and the Mesopotamian depression. Its backbone is a range of mountains running parallel to the western coast and rising to a height of over 9000 feet in Midian on the north and 14,000 in al-Yaman on the south.<sup>1</sup> Al-Sarah in al-Hijaz reaches an elevation of 10,000 feet. From this backbone the eastern fall is gradual and long; the western, towards the Red Sea, is steep and short. The southern sides of the peninsula, where the sea has been

<sup>1</sup> The highest measured point: Carl Rathjens and Hermann v. Wissmann, *Siidarabiens-Reise*, vol. iii, *Landeskundliche Ergebnisse* (Hamburg, 1934), p. 2.

receding from the coast at a rate reckoned at seventy-two feet per year, are fringed by lowlands, the Tihamahs. Najd, the north central plateau, has a mean elevation of 2500 feet. Its mountain range, Shammar, lifts one red granite peak, Aja', 5550 feet above the sea-level. Behind the coastal lowlands rise ranges of various heights on all three sides. In 'Uman, on the eastern coast, the summits of al-Jabal al-Akhdar soar to a height of 9900 feet, forming one notable exception to the general eastward decline of the surface of the land.

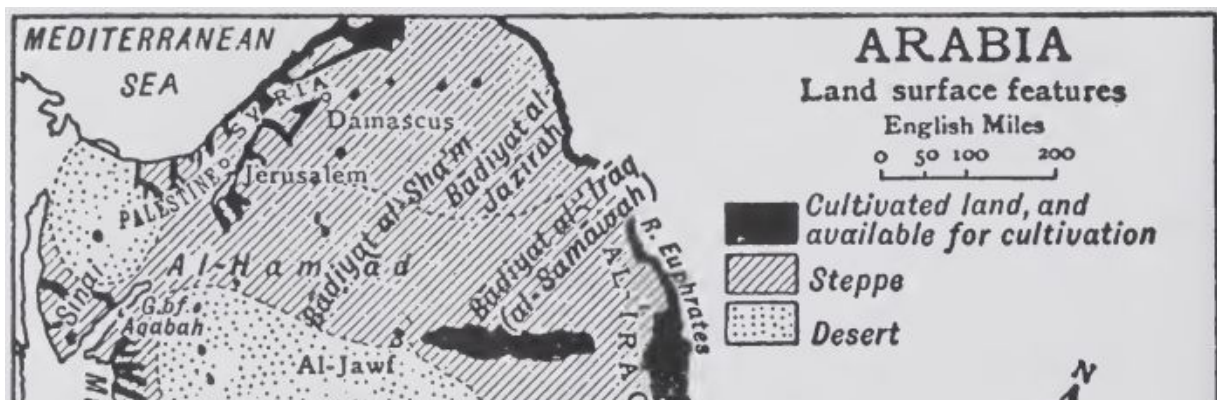
With the exception of the mountains and highlands just discussed the land consists mainly of desert and steppe. The steppes (sing, ddrah") are circular plains between hills covered with sand and embosoming subterranean waters. The so-called Syrian desert, Badiyat al-Sha m, as well as the Mesopotamian desert, are mostly steppeland. The southern part of the Syrian desert is colloquially known as al-Hamad. The southern part of the Mesopotamian steppeland is often referred to as Badiyat al-'Iraq or al-Samawah.

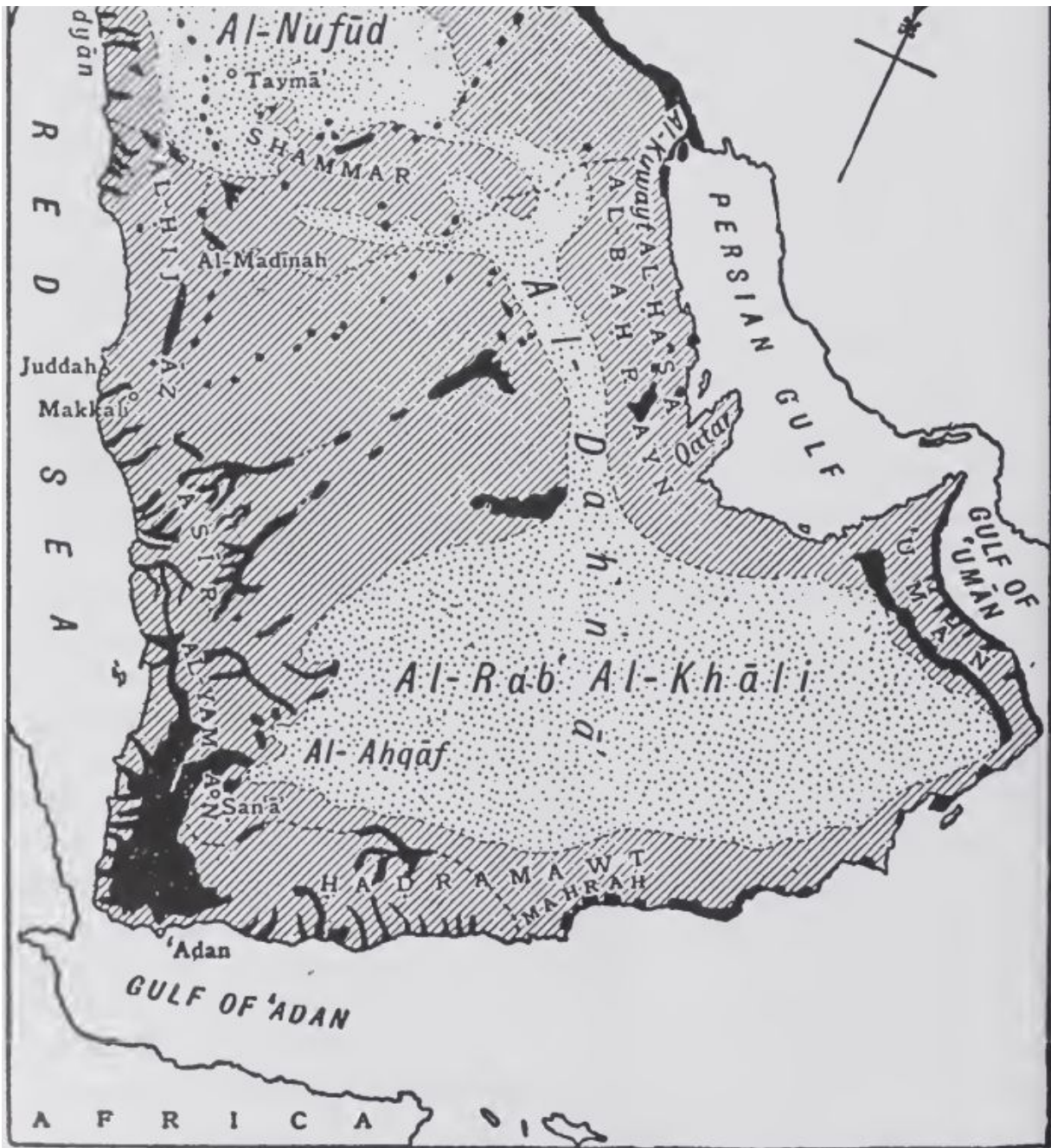
Of the desert land three varieties may be distinguished:

i. The great Nufud, a tract of white or reddish sand blown into high banks or dunes and covering a vast area in North Arabia. The classical term is al-badiyah^ sometimes al-dahna. Though dry except for an occasional oasis, al-Nufud receives in some winters enough rain to cover it with a carpet of verdure and convert it into a paradise for the camels and sheep of the wandering Bedouin. Among the first of the dozen Europeans who have succeeded in traversing the Nufud are the French Alsatian, Charles Huber(i 878); the English diplomatist and poet, WilfridS. Blunt (1879); and the Strassburg orientalist, Julius Euting (1883).

Q. Al-Dahna' (the red land), a surface of red sand, extends from the great Nufud in the north to al-Rab\* al-Khali in the south, describing a great arc to the south-east and stretching a distance of over six hundred miles. Its western part is sometimes distinguished as al-Ahqaf (dune land). On older maps al-Dahna' is usually indicated as al-Rab' al-Khali (the vacant quarter). When al-Dahna' receives seasonal rains, it abounds in pasturage attractive to the Bedouins and their cattle for several months a year, but in summer-time the region is void of the breath of life. Before Bertram Thomas <sup>1</sup> no European ever ventured to cross

<sup>1</sup> Arabia Felix: Across the Empty (Quarter of Arabia (New Y Drk, 1932).





Bnxry Lid. «6.

al-Rab' al-Khali, "no man's land" of Arabia. Arabian American Oil Company marked its 250,000 square miles on its maps. Thomas crossed it in fifty-eight days from the Arabian Sea to the Persian Gulf, encountered the phenomenon of singing sands and discovered a "lake of salt water", in

reality an arm of the Persian Gulf in the south of Qatar. Until then our knowledge of the dreaded and mysterious waste of South Arabia was no more than that of the tenth-century geographers.

3. Al-Harrah, a surface of corrugated and fissured lavas overlying sandstone. Volcanic tracts of this type abound in the western and central regions of the peninsula and extend north as far as eastern Hawran. Yaqut<sup>3</sup> lists no less than thirty such Harrahs. The last volcanic eruption reported by an Arab historian took place in A.D. 1256. ‘

Within this ring of desert and steppe lies an elevated core, Najd, the Wahhabiland. In Najd the limestone has long been generally exposed; here and there are occasional strips of sand. Mt. Shammar consists of granite and basalt rock.

Arabia is one of the driest and hottest of countries. Though sandwiched between seas on the east and west, those bodies of water are too narrow to break the climatic continuity of the Africo-Asian rainless continental masses. The ocean on the south, to be sure, does bring rains, but the simoom (samum) which seasonally lashes the land leaves very little moisture for the interior. The bracing and delightful east wind (al-saba) has always provided a favourite theme for Arabian poets.

### Climatic conditions

In al-Hijaz, the birthplace of Islam, seasons of drought extending possibly over a period of three or more years are not unknown. Rainstorms of short duration and extraordinary violence may strike Makkah and al-Madinah and occasionally threaten to overthrow the Ka’bah; al-Baladhuri<sup>4</sup> devotes a whole chapter to the floods {suyuV) of Makkah. Subsequent to these rains the hardy pastoral flora

of the desert makes its appearance. In northern al-Hijaz the isolated oases, the largest covering an area of some ten square miles, are the only support of settled life. Five-sixths of the population of al-Hijaz is nomadic. Certain oases, such as Fadak (now al-Ha\*it), which figured in early Islam, are today of no significance. Most of these fertile tracts were cultivated at the time of the Prophet by Jews. The mean annual temperature in the Hijaz lowland is nearer 90° than 80° F. Al-Madinah, with a mean temperature of little over 70° F., is more healthful than its sister to the south, Makkah.

Only in al-Yaman and 'Asir are there sufficient periodic rains to warrant a systematic cultivation of the soil. Perennial vegetation is here found in favoured valleys to a distance of about two hundred miles from the coast. San'a', the modern capital of al-Yaman, is over 7000 feet above the sea and therefore one of the healthiest and most beautiful towns of the peninsula. Other fertile but not continuous tracts are found on the coast. The surface of Hadramawt is marked by deeply sunk valleys where water is abundant in the subsoil. 'Uman, the easternmost province, receives a fair supply of rain. Especially hot and humid are Juddah (Jedda), al-Hudaydah (Hodeida) and Masqat (Muscat).

Arabia cannot boast a single river of significance which flows perennially and reaches the sea. None of its streams are navigable. In place of a system of rivers it has a network of wadis which carry away such floods as occur. These wadis serve another purpose: they determine the routes for the caravans and the pilgrimages. Since the rise of Islam the pilgrimages have formed the principal link between Arabia and the outer world. The chief land routes are from Mesopotamia, by way of Buray-dah in Najd, following the Wadi al-Rummah, and from Syria, passing through Wadi al-Sirhan and skirting the Red Sea coast. The intrapeninsular routes are either coastal, fringing nearly the whole

peninsula, or transpeninsular, running from southwest to north-east through the central oases and avoiding the stretch between, namely, the Vacant Quarter.

The tenth-century geographer al-Istakhri<sup>1</sup> speaks of only one place in al-Hijaz, the mountain near al-Ta'if, where water freezes. Al-Hamdani<sup>2</sup> refers to frozen water in San'a'. To these places Glaser<sup>3</sup> adds Mt. Hadur al-Shaykh, in al-Yaman, where snow 'alls almost every winter. Frost is more widespread.

## Vegetation

The dryness of the atmosphere and the salinity of the soil

<sup>1</sup> Masalik al-Mamalik, cd. de Goeje (Leyden, 1870), p. 19, 11. 12-13.

- Al-1 kill, Bk. VIII, ed. Nabih A. Faris (Princeton, 1940), p. 7; see also Nazih M. al-'Azm, Rihlah fi Bilad al-'Arab al-Sa'idah (Cairo, 1937?), pt. I, p. 118.

<sup>8</sup> In A. Petermann, Mitteilungen aus Justus Perthes geographischer Anstalt, rol. 32 (Gotha, 1886), p. 43.

mitigate against the possibility of any luxuriant growth. Al-Hijaz is rich in dates. Wheat grows in al-Yaman and certain oases. Barley is cultivated for horses. Millet (dhurah) grows in certain regions, and rice in Uman and al-Hasa. On the highlands parallel to the southern coast, and particularly in Mahrah, the frankincense tree, which figured prominently in the early commercial life of South Arabia, still flourishes. A characteristic product of 'Asir is gum-arabic. The coffee plant, for which al-Yaman is now famous, was introduced into South Arabia in the fourteenth century from Abyssinia. The earliest reference to this "wine of Islam" is in the writings of



the sixteenth century.<sup>1</sup> The earliest known mention of coffee by a European writer was in 1585.

Of the trees of the desert several species of acacia, including athl (tamarisk) and ghada, which gives excellent charcoal, are found. Another species, talk, yields gum-arabic. The desert also produces samh, the grains of which give a flour used for porridge, and the eagerly sought truffle and senna (al-sana).

Among the domestic plants the grape-vine, introduced from Syria after the fourth Christian century, is well represented in al-Ta'if, and yields the alcoholic beverage styled nabidh al-zablb. The wine (khamr'), however, sung by the Arabic poets, was the brand imported from Hawran and the Lebanon. The olive tree, native in Syria, is unknown in al-Hijaz. Other products of the Arabian oases are pomegranates, apples, apricots, almonds, oranges, lemons, sugar-cane, water-melons and bananas. The Nabataeans and Jews were probably the ones responsible for the introduction of such fruit trees from the north.

Among the Arabian flora the date-palm tree is queen. It bears the date-the most common and esteemed fruit: the fruit (tamr) par<sup>palm</sup> excellence. Together with milk it provides the chief item on the menu of the Bedouin, and, except for camel flesh, is his only solid food.<sup>2</sup> Its fermented beverage is the much-sought nabidh. Its crushed stones furnish the cakes which are the everyday meal of the camel. To possess "the two black ones" (al-aswadari), i.e. water and dates, is the dream of every Bedouin. The Prophet is reported to have enjoined, "Honour your aunt, the palm, which was made of the same clay as Adam".<sup>3</sup> Arab authors list

<sup>1</sup> See al-Jaziri in de Sacy, *Chrestomathie arabe*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1826), vol. i, pp. 138 seq., tr., pp. 412 seq.

<sup>2</sup> Consult ibn-Qutaybah, 'Uyun al-Akhbar (Cairo, 1930), vol. iii, pp. 209-13.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Suyup, Husn al-Muhadarah (Cairo, 1321), vol. ii, p. 255.

## Fauna

### The Arabian horse

a hundred varieties of dates in and around al-Madinah.

Even this queen of Arabian trees must have been introduced from the north, from Mesopotamia, where the palm tree was the chief object which attracted early man thither. The Arabic vocabulary in Najd and al-Hijaz relating to agriculture, e.g. ba l (watered by rain only),<sup>1</sup> akkar (ploughman), etc., indicates borrowing from the northern Semites, particularly the Aramaeans.

The animal kingdom is represented by panthers (sing. namir) leopards (sing. fahcTf) hyenas, wolves, foxes and lizards (especially al-dabb). The lion, frequently cited by the ancient poets of the peninsula, is now extinct. Monkeys are found in al-Yaman. Among the birds of prey eagles (^uqab'f) bustards (hub dr a, houbara), falcons, hawks and owls may be counted. Crows are abundant. The most common birds are the hoopoe (hudhud\ lark, nightingale, pigeon and a species of partridge celebrated in Arabic literature under the name al-qataf

Of domestic animals the principal ones are the camel, the ass, the ordinary watch-dog, the greyhound (saluqif the cat, the sheep and the goat. The mule is said to have been introduced from Egypt after the Hijrah by Muhammad.

The desert yields locusts, which the Bedouin relishes, especially when roasted with salt. Locust plagues are reputed to appear every seventh year. Of reptiles the Nufud boasts, by all accounts, the horned viper. Lawrence<sup>3</sup> speaks with horror of his experience with the snakes in Wadi al-Sirhan.

Renowned as it has become in Moslem literature, the horse was nevertheless a late importation into ancient Arabia. This animal, for which Najd is famous, was not known to the early Semites. Domesticated in early antiquity somewhere east of the Caspian Sea by nomadic Indo-European herdsmen, it was later imported on a large scale by the Kassites and Hittites and through them made its way, two millenniums before Christ, into Western Asia. From Syria it was introduced before the beginning of our era into Arabia, where it had the best opportunity to keep its blood pure and free from admixture. The Hyksos passed the horse on from Syria into Egypt and the Lydians from Asia Minor into Greece, where it was immortalized by Phidias on the

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 97.

\* See R. Meinertzhagen, *The Birds of Arabia* (Edinburgh, 1954).

' T. E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (New York, 1936), pp. 269-70.

Parthenon. In the Egyptian, Assyro-Babylonian and early Persian records the Arabian appears as a cameleer, not as a cavalier. The camel, rather than the horse, figured in the tributes exacted by the Assyrian conquerors from the "Urbi".<sup>1</sup> In Xerxes' army, intent upon the conquest of Greece, the Arabs rode camels.<sup>2</sup> Strabo,<sup>3</sup> presumably on the authority of his friend Aelius Gallus, the Roman general who

invaded Arabia as late as 24 B.C., denies the existence of the horse in the peninsula.

Renowned for its physical beauty, endurance, intelligence and touching devotion to its master, the Arabian thoroughbred (kuhaylan) is the exemplar from which all Western ideas about the good-breeding of horseflesh have been derived. In the eighth century the Arabs introduced it into Europe through Spain, where it left permanent traces in its Barbary and Andalusian descendants.<sup>4</sup> During the Crusades the English horse received fresh strains of blood through contact with the Arab.

In Arabia the horse is an animal of luxury whose feeding and care constitutes a problem to the man of the desert. Its possession is a presumption of wealth. Its chief value lies in providing the speed necessary for the success of a Bedouin raid (ghazw). It is also used for sports: in tournament (Jarld), coursing and hunting. In an Arab camp today in case of shortage of water the children might cry for a drink, but the master, unmoved, would pour the last drop into a pail to set before the horse.

If the horse is the most noble of the conquests of man, the camel is certainly from the nomad's point of view the most <sup>camel</sup> useful. Without it the desert could not be conceived of as a habitable place. The camel is the nomad's nourisher, his vehicle of transportation and his medium of exchange. The dowry of the bride, the price of blood, the profit of maysir (gambling), the wealth of a sheikh, are all computed in terms of camels. It is the Bedouin's constant companion, his alter ego, his foster parent. He drinks its milk instead of water (which he spares for the cattle); he feasts on its flesh; he covers himself with its skin; he makes his tent of its hair. Its dung he uses as fuel, and its urine as a

hair tonic and medicine. To him the camel is more than “the ship of the desert”; it is the special gift of Allah (cf.

<sup>1</sup> Below, pp. 39, 41.

<sup>1</sup> Herodotus, History, Bk. VII, ch. 86, § 8.

• Geography, Bk. XVI, ch. 4, §§ 2 & 26.

<sup>4</sup> William R Brown, *The Hone of the Desert* (New York, 1929), pp. 123 teg

Koran 16:5-8). To quote a striking phrase of Sprenger,<sup>1</sup> the Bedouin is “the parasite of the camel”. The Bedouins of our day take delight in referring to themselves as *ahi al-bair*, the people of the camel. Musil<sup>2</sup> states that there is hardly a member of the Ruwalah tribe who has not on some occasion drunk water from a camel’s paunch. In time of emergency either an old camel is killed or a stick is thrust down its throat to make it vomit water. If the camel has been watered within a day or two, the liquid is tolerably drinkable. The part which the camel has played in the economy of Arabian life is indicated by the fact that the Arabic language is said to include some one thousand names for the camel in its numerous breeds and stages of growth, a number rivalled only by the number of synonyms used for the sword. The Arabian camel can go for about twenty-five days in winter and about five days in summer without water. The camel was a factor in facilitating the early Moslem conquests by assuring its masters more mobility than, and consequent advantage over, the settled peoples. The Caliph 'Umar is quoted as having said: “The Arab prospers only where the camel prospers”. The peninsula remains the chief camel-breeding centre in the world. The horses of Najd, the donkeys of al-Hasa and the dromedaries of \*Uman are world famous. In the past the pearl fisheries of 'Uman and the

Persian Gulf region, the salt mines of certain areas and the camel industry were the main sources of income. But since the beginning of the exploitation of the oil-fields in 1933, the extensive activities connected with the oil industry have become by far the greatest source. The oil-fields of al-Hasa are classed among the richest in the world.

From north-western Arabia the camel, like the horse originally an American animal, was introduced into Palestine and Syria on the occasion of the invasion of the Midianites in the eleventh century B.C. (Judges 6 : 5, cf. Gen. 24 : 64), the first record of the widespread use of this animal.<sup>3</sup> It was introduced into Egypt with the Assyrian conquest in the seventh century B.C., and into northern Africa with the Mbslem invasion in the seventh century after Christ.

<sup>1</sup> In Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenlàn disc hen Gesellschaft, xlv (1891 ), p. 361,1.13.

<sup>2</sup> The Manners and Customs of the Rwala Bedouins (New York, 1928), p. 368. Cf. Bertram Thomas in The Near East and India, Nov. 1, 1928, p. 518.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Carleton S. Coon, Caravan: the Story of the Middle East (New York, 1951), p. 61.

## CHAPTER III

### BEDOUIN LIFE

CORRESPONDING to the twofold nature of the land, the inhabit- The ants of Arabia fall into two main groups: nomadic Bedouins <sup>nomad</sup> and settled folk. The line of demarcation between the wandering and the sedentary elements in the population is not always sharply drawn.

There are stages of semi-nomadism and of quasi-urbanity. Certain townsfolk who were at one time Bedouin still betray their nomadic origin, while other Bedouins are townspeople in the making. The blood of the settled population is thus constantly refreshed by a nomadic strain.

The Bedouin is no gypsy roaming aimlessly for the sake of roaming. He represents the best adaptation of human life to desert conditions. Wherever verdant land is found, there he goes seeking pasture. Nomadism is as much a scientific mode of living in the Nufud as industrialism is in Detroit or Manchester.

— Action and reaction between the townsfolk and the desert folk are motivated by the urgent dictates of self-interest and selfpreservation. The nomad insists on extracting from his more favourably situated neighbour such resources as he himself lacks, and that either by violence—raids—or by peaceful methods —exchange. He is land-pirate or broker, or both at once. The desert, where the Bedouin plays the part of the pirate, shares certain common characteristics with the sea.

The nomad, as a type, is today what he was yesterday and what he will be tomorrow. His culture pattern has always been the same. Variation, progress, evolution, are not among the laws he readily obeys. Immune to the invasion of exotic ideas and manners, he still lives, as his forbears did, in tents of goats' or camels' hair, "houses of hair", and grazes his sheep and goats in the same fashion and on the same pastures. Sheep- and camelraising, and to a lesser degree horse-breeding, hunting and raiding, form his staple occupation and are to his mind the only occupations worthy of a man. Agriculture and all varieties of

trade and craft are beneath his dignity. If and when he frees himself from his environment he is no more a nomad. In the Fertile Crescent empires have come and gone, but in the barren wastes the Bedouin has remained for ever the same.<sup>1</sup>

Over all the living things of the desert the Bedouin, the camel and the palm are the triumvirate that rules supreme; and together with the sand they constitute the four great actors in the drama of its existence.

To its denizen the desert is more than a habitat: it is the custodian of his sacred tradition, the preserver of the purity of his speech and blood and his first and foremost line of defence against encroachment from the outside world. Its scarcity of water, scorching heat, trackless roads, lack of food-supply— all enemies in normal times—prove staunch allies in time of danger. Little wonder then that the Arabian has rarely bent his neck to a foreign yoke.

The continuity, monotony and aridity of his desert habitat are faithfully reflected in the Bedouin physical and mental makeup. Anatomically he is a bundle of nerves, bones and sinews. The leanness and barrenness of his land show themselves in his physique. His daily food is dates and a mixture of flour, or roasted corn, with water or milk. His raiment is as scanty as his nourishment: a long shirt (thawb') with a belt and a flowing upper garment (^aba') which pictures have made familiar. The head is covered by a shawl (kufiyah') held by a cord t^iqal"). Trousers are not worn and footwear is rare. Tenacity, endurance (sabr\ seems to be his supreme virtue, enabling him to survive where almost everything else perishes. Passivity is the obverse of this same virtue. Passive endurance is to him preferable to any attempt to change the state in which he finds himself, no matter how hard his lot. Individualism, another characteristic trait, is so deeply ingrained that the



Bedouin has never been able to raise himself to the dignity of a social being of the international type, much less to develop ideals of devotion to the common good beyond that which pertains to the tribe. Discipline, respect for order and authority, are no idols in desert life. "O Lord", prayed a Bedouin, "have mercy upon me and upon Muhammad, but upon no one else besides!"<sup>2</sup> Since the days of Ishmael the

<sup>1</sup> A central feature of ibn-Su'ud's economic and social reforms is the settlement of nomads on the soil. <sup>1</sup> Abu-Dawud, Sunan (Cairo, 1280), vol. i, p. 89.

Arabian's hand has been against every man and every man's hand against him.

The ghazw (razzia), otherwise considered a form of brigandage, is raised by the economic and social conditions of desert life to the rank of a national institution. It lies at the base of the economic structure of Bedouin pastoral society. In desert land, where the fighting mood is a chronic mental condition, raiding is one of the few manly occupations. Christian tribes, too, such as the banu-Taghlib, practised it without any mental reservations. The poet al-Qutami of the early Umayyad period has given expression to the guiding principle of such life in two verses: Our business is to make raids on the enemy, on our neighbour and on our own brother, in case we find none to raid but a brother!" <sup>1</sup> In Su'udi Arabia raids are now illegal.

## Razzia

According to the rules of the game—and ghazw is a sort of national sport no blood should be shed except in cases of extreme necessity. Ghazw does help to a certain extent to keep down the number of mouths to feed, though it does not actually increase the sum-total of available supplies. A

weaker tribe or a sedentary settlement on the borderland may buy protection by paying the stronger tribe what is today called khilwah. These ideas of ghazw and its terminology were carried over by the Arabians into the Islamic conquests.

The principle of hospitality, however, mitigates in some measure the evils of ghazw. However dreadful as an enemy he may be, the Bedouin is also within his laws of friendship a loyal and generous friend. Pre-Islamic poets, the journalists of their day, never tired of singing the praises of diyafah (hospitality) which, with hamasah (fortitude and enthusiasm) and muruah (manliness),<sup>2</sup> is considered one of the supreme virtues of the race. The keen competition for water and pasturage, on which the chief causes of conflict centre, splits the desert populace into warring tribes; but the common consciousness of helplessness in the face of a stubborn and malignant nature develops a feeling for the necessity of one sacred duty: that of hospitality. To refuse a guest such a courtesy in a land where no inns or hotels obtain, or to harm him after accepting him as a guest, is an

<sup>1</sup> Abu-Tammam, *Ash'dr al-Hamasah*, ed. Freytag (Bonn, 1828), p. 171

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Ignaz Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, pt. 1 (Halle, 1889), p. 13 offence not only against the established mores and honour but against God Himself, the real protector.

Religiousness

The clan

The rudiments of Semitic religion developed in the oases, rather than in the sandy land, and centred upon stones and springs, forerunners of the Black Stone and Zamzam in Islam and of Bethel in the Old Testament. In the case of the Bedouin, religion sits very lightly indeed on his heart. In the judgment of the Koran (9 : 98), “the desert Arabians are most confirmed in unbelief and hypocrisy”. Up to our present day they never pay much more than lip homage to the prophet.<sup>1</sup>

The clan organization is the basis of Bedouin society. Every tent represents a family; an encampment of tents forms a hayy, members of one hayy constitute a clan (qawm). A number of kindred clans grouped together make a tribe {qabilali}. All members of the same clan consider each other as of one blood, submit to the authority of but one chief—the senior member of the clan—and use one battle-cry. “Banu” (children of) is the title with which they prefix their joint name. The feminine names of certain clans show traces of the earlier matriarchal system. Blood relationship, fictitious or real, furnishes the adhesive element in tribal organization.

The tent and its humble household contents are individual property, but water, pasturage and cultivable land are the common property of the tribe.

If a member of a clan commits murder inside the clan, none will defend him. In case of escape he becomes an outlaw (tarlcf). If the murder is outside the clan, a vendetta is established, and any fellow clan-member may have to pay for it with his own life.

Blood, according to the primitive law of the desert, calls for blood; no chastisement is recognized other than that of vengeance. The nearest of kin is supposed to assume

primary responsibility. A blood feud may last forty years, as in the case of the Basus War between the banu-Bakr and the banu-Taghlib. In all the ayyam al- Arab, those intertribal battles of pre-Islamic days, the chroniclers emphasize the blood feud motif, though underlying economic reasons must have motivated many of the events. Sometimes a bloodwite {diyah} is accepted.

No worse calamity could befall a Bedouin than to lose his

<sup>1</sup> Amecn Rihani, Tcirikh Najd (Beiru 928), P- <sup>2</sup>33\* tribal affiliation. A tribeless man, in a land where stranger and enemy are synonymous, like a landless man in feudal England, is practically helpless. His status is that of an outlaw, one beyond the pale of protection and safety.

Though primarily a matter of birth, clan kinship may be individually acquired by sharing a member's food or sucking a few drops of his blood. Herodotus <sup>1</sup> speaks of this ancient rite of adoption. If a slave is freed he often finds it to his interest to keep some attachment with the family of his former master, thus becoming a client (mawlay A stranger may seek such a relationship and is styled a protégé (dakhīi). In like manner a whole weaker clan might desire the protection of, and ultimately become absorbed by, a stronger clan or tribe. The T<sup>a</sup>yyi , Ghatafân, Taghlib, etc., were confederations of North Arabian tribes which figured prominently in history and whose descendants still survive in Arabic-speaking lands.

An analogous custom in religion made it possible for a stranger to become attached to the service of a sanctuary <sup>2</sup> and thus become a client of the god. To the present day the pilgrims to Makkah are referred to as "the guests of Allah", and the students connected with the mosque of Makkah or

any other great mosque are called “[His] neighbours” (sing, mujawir).

Asabiyah is the spirit of the clan. It implies boundless and 'Asabiyah unconditional loyalty to fellow clansmen and corresponds in general to patriotism of the passionate, chauvinistic type. “Be loyal to thy tribe,” sang a bard, “its claim upon its members is strong enough to make a husband give up his wife.”<sup>3</sup> This ineradicable particularism in the clan, which is the individualism of the member of the clan magnified, assumes that the clan or tribe, as the case may be, is a unit by itself, self-sufficient and absolute,’ and regards every other clan or tribe as its legitimate victim and object of plunder and murder. Islam made full use of the tribal system for its military purposes. It divided the army into units based on tribal lines, settled the colonists in the conquered lands in tribes and treated new converts from among the subjugated peoples as clients. The unsocial features of individualism and ‘asabiyah were never outgrown by the Arab character as it developed and unfolded itself after the rise of Islam, and were

<sup>1</sup> Bk. III, ch. 8.

\* Cf. Ezekiel 44: 7.

<sup>3</sup> ALMubarrad, al-Kantil, ed. W. Wright (Leipzig, 1864), P-229, l. 3

among the determining factors that led to the disintegration and ultimate downfall of the various Islamic states.

The sheikh

The clan is represented by its titular head, the sheikh. Unlike his modern namesake of Hollywood fame, the sheikh (shaykh) is the senior member of the tribe whose leadership asserts itself in sober counsel, in generosity and in courage.

Seniority in age and personal qualifications determine the choice. In judicial, military and other affairs of common concern the sheikh is not the absolute authority; he must consult with the tribal council composed of the heads of the component families. His tenure of office lasts during the good-will of his constituency.

The Arabian in general and the Bedouin in particular is a born democrat. He meets his sheikh on an equal footing. The society in which he lives levels everything down. The title malik (king) the Arabians never used except in referring to foreign rulers and the partially Romanized and Persianized dynasties of Ghassan and al-Hirah. The kings of the banu-Kindah formed the only exception to this rule. But the Arabian is also aristocratic as well as democratic. He looks upon himself as the embodiment of the consummate pattern of creation. To him the Arabian nation is the noblest of all nations (afkhar al-umam). The civilized man, from the Bedouin's exalted point of view, is less happy and far inferior. In the purity of his blood, his eloquence and poetry, his sword and horse and above all in his noble ancestry (nasab) the Arabian takes infinite pride. He is excessively fond of prodigious genealogies and often traces his lineage back to Adam. No people, other than the Arabians, have ever raised genealogy to the dignity of a science.

The Bedouin woman, whether Islamic or pre-Islamic, enjoyed and still enjoys a measure of freedom denied to her sedentary sister. She lived in a polygamous family and under a baal system of marriage in which the man was the master, nevertheless she was at liberty to choose a husband and leave him if ill-treated.

Ability to assimilate other cultures when the opportunity presents itself is well marked among the children of the desert. Faculties which have remained dormant for ages

seem to awake suddenly, under the proper stimuli, and develop into dynamic powers. In the Fertile Crescent lies the field of opportunity. A Hammurabi makes his appearance in Babylon, a Moses in Sinai, a Zenobia in Palmyra, a Philip the Arab in Rome or a Harun al-Rashid in Baghdad. Monuments are built, like those of Petra, which still arouse the admiration of the world. The phenomenal and almost unparalleled efflorescence of early Islam was due in no small measure to the latent powers of the Bedouins, who, in the words of the Caliph 'Umar, “furnished Islam with its raw material”.<sup>5</sup>

## CHAPTER IV

### EARLY INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### South Arabians

We have thus far used the term Arabian for all the inhabitants of the peninsula without regard to geographical location. We must now differentiate between the South Arabians and the North Arabians, the latter including the Najdis of Central Arabia. The geographical division of the land by the trackless desert into northern and southern sections has its counterpart in the peoples who inhabit it.

The North Arabians are mostly nomads living in “houses of hair” in al-Hijaz and Najd; the South Arabians are in the main sedentary, domiciled in al-Yaman, Hadramawt and along the neighbouring coast. The Northerners speak the language of the Koran, the Arabic par excellence; the Southerners used an ancient Semitic tongue of their own, Sabaean or Himyarite, with which the Ethiopic of Africa is closely allied. Both are dolichocephalic (long-headed) members of the Mediterranean race. But the Southerners have a considerable coastal element that is brachycephalic

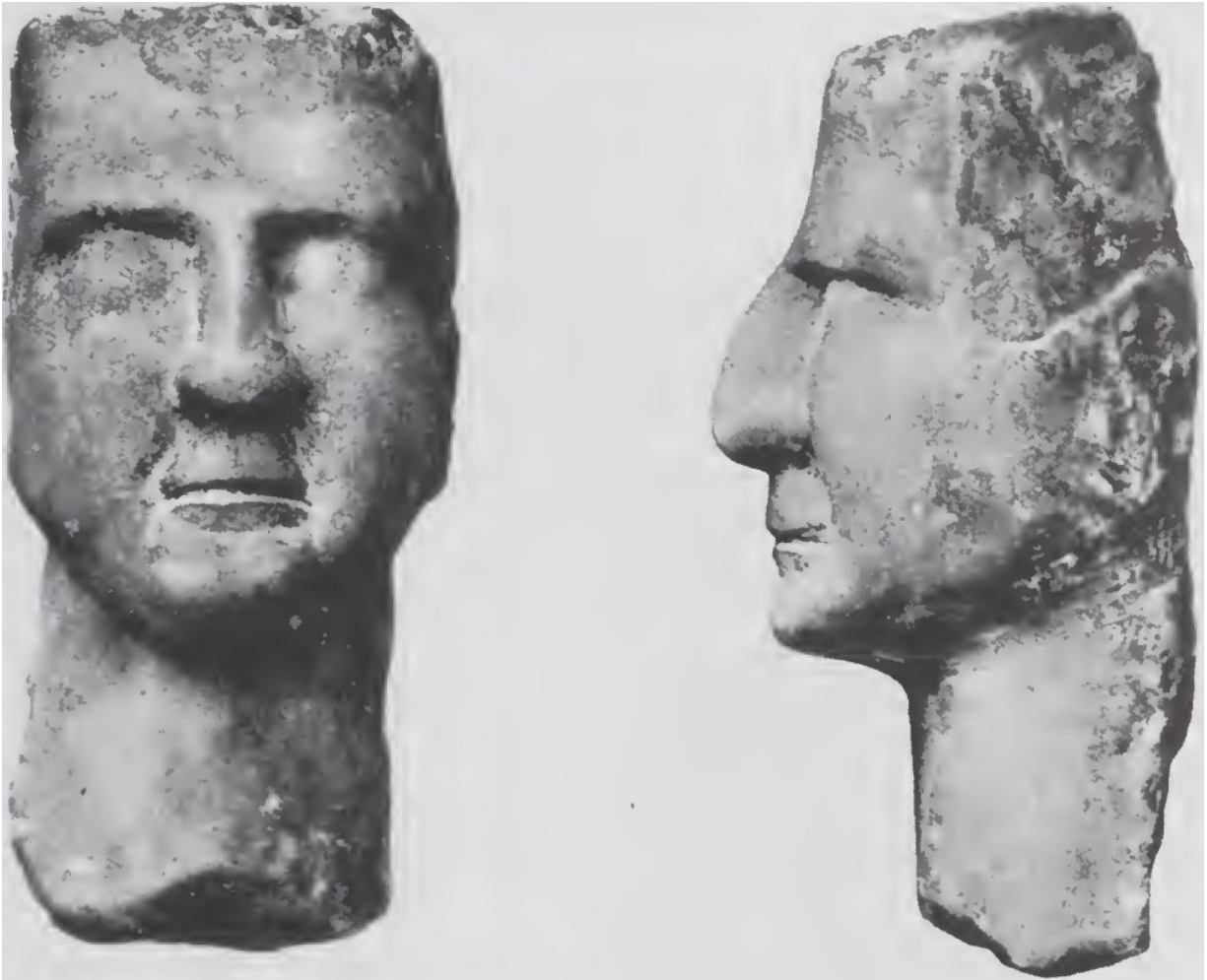
(round-headed), with a broad jaw and aquiline nose, flat cheeks and abundant hair, characteristic of the Armenoid (Hittite, Hebrew) type. It is an intrusive element borne to South Arabia perhaps by sea from the north-east.<sup>1</sup> The South Arabians were the first to rise to prominence and develop a civilization of their own. The North Arabians did not step on to the stage of international affairs until the advent of Islam.

The memory and consciousness of this national distinction among the Arabians is reflected in their own traditional genealogies. They divide themselves first into two groups: extinct (baidahf including Thamud, 'Ad—both of koranic fame—, Tasm and Jadls, and surviving (baqiyafi). The Thamud were an historical people mentioned in the cuneiform annals of Sargon II <sup>8</sup> and known to classical writers as “Tamudaei”.<sup>3</sup> The 'Adites

<sup>1</sup> Carleton S. Coon, *The Races of Europe* (New York, 1939), pp. 403-4, 408.

<sup>1</sup> D. D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, vol. ii (Chicago, 1927), §§ 17» 118. \* Pliny, *Natural History*, Bk. VI, ch. 32.





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From D. H. Muller, "Sudarabische AUerthitmer" (Hölder-Pichler-Temf>sky, Vienna}

## SABAKAN TYPES

are supposed to have flourished in ancient Hadramawt. Next, the genealogists proceed to subdivide the surviving

Arabians into two ethnic stocks: Arabian Arabs (^aribaji) and Arabicized Arabs (mustarib all}. The 'Aribah, according to them, are Yamanites descended from Qahtan (the Joktan of the Old Testament) and constitute the aboriginal stock; the Musta'ribah are the Hijazis, Najdis, Nabataeans and Palmyrenes, all descended from 'Adnan—an offspring of Ishmael—and are “naturalized” in the land. In the traditional Qahtan and 'Adnan is a reminiscence of the differentiation between South Arabians and North Arabians. The Madinese who rushed to the support of the Prophet at the time of his Hijrah were of Yamanite origin, but his own family, the Quraysh, were Nizari of the northern stock. The Ghassanids of eastern Syria and the Lakh-mids of al-Hirah in al-'Iraq were Southerners domiciled in the north.

This gulf between the two Arabian stocks was never bridged. The age-old division continued to be as prominent as ever, even after Islam had apparently unified the Arabian nation.

#### i Relations wit? Egypt

Like a thick wedge the Arabian peninsula thrusts itself between the two earliest seats of culture: Egypt and Babylonia. The Panjab in India may have been a third cultural focus, and the peninsula lies between it and the West. Although Arabia was not brought within the scope of the river-valley culture of either the land of the one river or the land of the twin rivers, yet it could not entirely have escaped their influence. Its culture, however, was at bottom indigenous. It belonged to the maritime type. Its south-eastern people were possibly the ones who acted as intermediaries between Egypt, Mesopotamia and the Panjab —the three focal centres of earliest trade—and gave their name to the great intervening sea.

Africa touches Arabia in the north at the Sinaitic peninsula, over which a land route passes, comes close to it in the south at Bab al-Mandab, only fifteen miles across, and is connected with mid-western Arabia by a third route which follows Wadi al-Hammamat, opposite the bend of the Nile near Thebes, and connects with the Red Sea at al-Qusayr. This last route was the chief central connection. During the Twelfth Egyptian Dynasty (ca. 2000-1788 B.C.) a canal above Bilbays connected the Nile with the Red Sea. Restored by the Ptolemies, this canal, the antecedent of the Suez Canal, was reopened by the caliphs and used until the discovery (1497) of the route to India round the Cape of Good Hope.

The Egyptian interest in Sinai arose because of its copper and sinaitic turquoise mines located in Wadi Magharah in the southern part <sup>coPPer</sup> of the peninsula near the modern town of al-Tur. Even in pre-dynastic days the nomads of Sinai were exporting their valued products to Egypt. Pharaohs of the First Dynasty operated the mines of the peninsula, but the period of great exploitation started with Snefru (ca. 2720 B.C.) of the Third Dynasty. The

From G. Elliot Smith, "The Ancient Egyptians and the Origin of Civilisation" (Harper & Bros)

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN REPRESENTATIONS OF ARABIANS (Ca. 2000 B.c. and 1500 B.c. respectively)

great road connecting Egypt with Syria-Palestine and thence reaching to the rest of the Fertile Crescent and Asia Minor — that first international highway used by man—sent a branch south-east to these copper and turquoise mines of Sinai. In a royal tomb of the First Dynasty at Abydos, Petrie

found in 1900 on a piece of ivory a portrait of a typical Armenoid Semite labelled “Asiatic”, with a long pointed beard and shaven upper lip, presumably a South Arabian. An earlier relief belonging to the same dynasty shows an emaciated Bedouin chief in a loincloth crouching in submission before his Egyptian captor, who is about to brain the Bedouin with his mace. These are the earliest representations of Arabians extant. The word for Bedouin (Eg. 'amu, nomad, Asiatic) figures prominently in the early Egyptian annals and in some cases refers to nomads around Egypt and outside of Arabia proper.

### Frankincense

South Arabia was brought nearer to Egypt when the latter established commercial relationships with Punt and Nubia. Herodotus <sup>1</sup> speaks of Sesostris, probably Senusert I (1980-1935 B.C.) of Dynasty XII, as conquering the nations on the Arabian Gulf, presumably the African side of the Red Sea. The Eighteenth Dynasty maintained a fleet in the Red Sea, but as early as the Fifth Dynasty we find Sahure (2553-2541 B.C.) conduct-

ing the first maritime expedition by way of that sea to an incense-producing land, evidently Somaliland on the African shore.

The chief attraction for the Egyptians in South Arabia lay in the frankincense, which they prized highly for temple use and mummification and in which that part of Arabia was particularly rich. When Nubia was subjugated and Punt (modern Somaliland) brought within the commercial sphere of the Egyptian empire many expeditions were conducted to those places to procure “myrrh, fragrant gums, resin and aromatic woods”. Such an expedition to Punt was undertaken by Hatshepsut (ca. 1500

From A. T. Olmstead, "History of Palestine and Syria"  
{Charles Scribner s Sons'}

## SEMERKIIET, THE SIXTH KING OF THE FIRST DYNASTY, SMITING THE CHIEF OF THE NOMADS

B.C.), the first famous woman in history. The emissaries of her successor, Thutmose III, the Napoleon of ancient Egypt, brought (1479 B.C.) from the same land the usual cargo of "ivory, ebony, panther-skins and slaves". As these were also the products of al-Yaman in south-western Arabia it is not unlikely that the Egyptians used the term "Punt" for the land on both sides of Bab al-Mandab. Gold may also have come from Arabia. The incense trade with South Arabia went through Wadi al-Hammamat, making that central route the most important link with South Arabia.

<sup>1</sup> Bk. II, ch. 102.

## A FRANKINCENSE TREE AND A MAHRI COLLECTOR

Hadramawt,<sup>1</sup> which in ancient times included the coastlands Mahrah and al-Shihr,<sup>2</sup> was the celebrated land of frankincense. Zafar, formerly a town and now a district on the coast, was its chief centre. The modern name is Dhufar and it is under the nominal rule of the sultan of 'Uman. This Zafar, the commercial centre of the frankincense country and situated as it is on the southern coast, should not be confused with the inland Zafar in al-Yaman, which was the Himyarite capital.<sup>3</sup> The frankincense (tub an, whence "olibanum") tree still flourishes in Hadramawt and other

parts of South Arabia. As of old, Zafar is still the chief centre of its trade.

The ancient Egyptians were not the only people who had a commercial interest in Arabia. Their foremost rivals for the trade in spices and minerals were the people of Babylonia.

## 2. Relations with the Sumerians and Babylonians

Eastern Arabia bordered on Mesopotamia. The early inhabitants of that region, the Sumerians and Akkadians, had already by the fourth millennium before our era become familiar with their neighbours of the Westland (Amurru) and were able to communicate with them both by land and water.

The source of supply of the Sumerian copper, the earliest metal discovered and used in industry, was probably in 'Uman.

On a diorite statue of Naram-Sin (ca. 2171 B.C.), a grandson and successor of Sargon (the first great name in Semitic history), we read that he conquered Magan and defeated its lord, Manium.<sup>4</sup> Gudea (ca. 2000 B.C.), the Sumerian patesi of Lagash, tells us of his expedition to procure stone and wood for his temple from Magan and Melukhkha. These two Sumerian place-names, Magan and Melukhkha, evidently were first applied to certain regions in east and central Arabia but were later, in the Assyrian period, shifted to more distant localities in the Sinaitic peninsula and eastern Africa. "Magan" is not etymologically identifiable with Arabic "Maan," name of an oasis in northern al-Hijaz (now in Transjordan), possibly an ancient Minaean colony on the caravan route. In these cuneiform inscriptions we have the

first recorded reference in history to a place in Arabia and to an Arabian people.

<sup>1</sup> Hašarmaweth of Gen. 10 : 26.

<sup>1</sup> In its later and modern use the name al-Shihr has been applied to the whole frankincense coast, including Mahrah and Zafar.

' Cf. Yaqut, *Buldan*, vol. iii, pp. 576-7.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. F. Thureau-Dangin, *Les inscriptions de Sumer et d'Akkad* (Paris, 1905), PP- 23B, 239.

The "Sealand" of the cuneiform inscriptions was, according to a recent theory, located in Arabia proper and included the western shore of the Persian Gulf as far as the isle of al-Bahrayn (ancient Dilmun) and possibly al-Nufud as far west as al-'Aqabah. Nabopolassar was king of the Sealand before he became king of Babylon.

The first unmistakable reference to the Arabians as such occurs <sup>3</sup>. As in an inscription of the Assyrian Shalmaneser III, who led an <sup>8^3</sup> expedition against the Aramaean king of Damascus and his allies Ahab and Jundub, an Arabian sheikh. The encounter took place in 853 B.C. at Qarqar, north of Hamah. These are the words of Shalmaneser:

Karkar, his royal city, I destroyed, I devastated, I burned with fire. 1,200 chariots, 1,200 cavalry, 20,000 soldiers of Hadad-ezer, of Aram (? Damascus); . . . 1,000 camels of Gindibu\*, the Arabian.<sup>1</sup>

It seems very appropriate that the name of the first Arabian in recorded history should be associated with the camel.

Anxious to ensure the safety of the trade highways passing through the far-flung Assyrian empire and converging on the Mediterranean, Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727 B.C.), founder of the second Assyrian empire, conducted a series of campaigns against Syria and its environs. In the third year of his reign he exacted tribute from Zabibi, the queen of "Aribi" land. In the ninth year he conquered another queen of Aribi, Samsi (Shams or Shamsiyah) by name. His annals record that in 728 B.C. the Mas'ai tribe, the city of Temai (Tayma') and the Sab'ai (Sabaeans) sent him tribute of gold, camels and spices. These tribes evidently lived in the Sinai peninsula and the desert to the north-east.<sup>2</sup> Thus was Tiglath-Pileser III the first to fasten the yoke on Arabian necks.

Sargon II (722-705 B.C.), the conqueror of Carchemish and Samaria, reports that in the seventh year of his reign he subjugated among others the tribes of Tamud (Thamud of the Koran) and Ibàdid, "who inhabit the desert, who know neither high nor low official", struck them down and deported the remnant to Samaria.<sup>3</sup> At the same time he received from Samsi,

<sup>1</sup> Luckenbill, vol. i, § 611.

<sup>1</sup> Ditlef Nielsen, *Handbuch der altarabischen Altertumskunde*, vol. i, *Die altarabischen Kultur* (Copenhagen. 1927), p. 65.

<sup>1</sup> Luckenbill, vol. ii, § 17.

queen of Arabia, It'amara (Yatha'-amar), the Sabaean chief, and from other kings of Egypt and the desert "gold, products of the mountain, precious stones, ivory, seed of the maple (?), all kinds of herbs, horses, and camels, as their tribute".<sup>1</sup> This It'amara of Saba' was evidently one of the Yatha'-amars who bear the royal title mukarrib in the South Arabic



inscriptions. Likewise his successor Kariba-il of Saba', from whom Sennacherib claims to have received tribute, must have been the south-western Arabian identified with Kariba-il of the inscriptions.<sup>2</sup> If so, the "tribute" claimed by the Assyrians could not have been but freewill presents offered by these South Arabian rulers to the Assyrian kings as equals and probably as allies in the common struggle against the wild nomads of North Arabia.

About 688 B.C. Sennacherib reduced "Adumu, the fortress of Arabia" and carried away to Nineveh the local gods and the queen herself, who was also the priestess. Adumu is the oasis in North Arabia that figured later in the Islamic conquests under the name Dumat al-Jandal. The queen, Telkhunu (Te'elkhunu) by name, had allied herself with the rebellious Babylonians against the Assyrian suzerainty, and was assisted by Hazael, the chief of the Qedar (Assyrian Kidri)tribe, whose headquarters were in Palmyrena.

Esarhaddon about 676 suppressed a rebellion headed by Uaite', the son and successor of Hazael, who, "to save his life, forsook his camp, and, fleeing alone, escaped to distant (parts)".<sup>3</sup> Evidently the Bedouins proved a thorn in the side of the Assyrian empire and were incited to revolt by both Egypt and Babylonia. On his famous march (670) to the conquest of Egypt, the terrible Assyrian was so unnerved by his fearful privations in the North Arabian desert that he saw "two-headed serpents" and other frightful reptiles that "flapped their wings".<sup>4</sup> Isaiah (30 : 6), in his "burden" of the beasts of the south, mentions "the viper and fiery flying serpent". Herodotus<sup>5</sup> assures us that "vipers are found in all parts of the world; but the winged serpents are nowhere seen except in Arabia, where they are all congregated together".

In his ninth campaign, directed against the Arabian tribes,

<sup>1</sup> Luckenbill, vol. ii, § 18.

<sup>8</sup> Luckenbill, vol. ii, § 946.

<sup>6</sup> Bk. III, ch. 109.

<sup>8</sup> Nielsen, Handbuch, vol. i, pp. 75 seq.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *ibid.* vol. ii, § 558.

Ashurbanipal (668-626 B.C.) captured Uaite' and his armies after a severe struggle.

Many references are made in the Assyrian annals to Arabian chiefs "kissing the feet" of the kings of Nineveh and offering them among other presents gold, precious stones, eyebrow dyes (kohl, antimony), frankincense, camels and donkeys. In fact we read of no less than nine different campaigns undertaken by Sargon II, Sennacherib, Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal to chastise the unconquerable Bedouins who were for ever harassing the Assyrian provinces in Syria, interfering with the caravan routes and receiving aid and comfort from Egypt and Babylonia, both hostile to Assyria. The "Urbi" mentioned in these campaigns must have been mainly Bedouins, and their land, Aribi, must have been the Syro-Mesopotamian desert, the Sinaitic peninsula and North Arabia. In Sinai the Midianites of the Old Testament and not the Nabataeans were those brought under Assyrian control. The Sabaeans proper in south-western Arabia were never subjugated by Nineveh. The Assyrians, though rightly called the Romans of the ancient world, could not have brought under even nominal rule more than the oases and a few tribes in North Arabia.

Among the settlements of the north at this period Tayma' 4. Neo-(Tema and Te-ma-a of the Assyro-Babylonian records) won Babylon' special distinction as the provincial residence of Nabonidus Persian re (556-539 B.C.), the last king of the Chaldaeans. The Chaldaeans ^S.; had fallen heir to the Assyrian empire, which included, since the days of Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727 B.C.), Syria and a portion of North Arabia. In the third year of his reign Nabonidus, in the words of a cuneiform inscription, "slew the prince of Tema" and established himself in that oasis.<sup>1</sup>

The most significant reference in cuneiform literature to this Arabian oasis occurs in a chronicle relating to the fall of Babylon (539 B.C.) into the hands of the Persians. The chronicle states that Nabonidus was in "al Tema" in the seventh, ninth, tenth and eleventh years of his reign, while his son (i.e. Belshazzar) and the soldiers were in Babylonia.

In 525 Cambyses, the son and successor of the founder of the Persian empire, passed through northern Arabia and made an alliance with its people while on his way to the conquest of <sup>1</sup> R. P. Dougherty, Nabonidus and Belshazzar (New Haven, 1929), pp. 106-7.

Egypt. Speaking of Darius, Herodotus<sup>1</sup> remarks: "The Arabians were never reduced to the subjection of Persia".

The Tayma\* stone, bought by Huber (1883) and now deposited in the Louvre, bears one of the most valuable Semitic inscriptions ever found. Its date goes back to the fifth century B.C. Written in Aramaic, it records how a new deity, Salm of Hajam, was introduced into Tayma\* by a certain priest who further provided an endowment for the new temple and established a hereditary priesthood.<sup>2</sup> The new deity is represented in the Assyrian fashion and below him stands his priest who erected the stela.

## 5. Contacts with the Hebrews

The Jews were geographically next-door neighbours of the Arabians and racially their nearest of kin. Echoes of the desert origin of the Hebrews abound in the Old Testament.<sup>3</sup> Hebrew and Arabic, as we have learned before, are cognate Semitic tongues. Some of the Hebrew Old Testament names are Arabic, e.g. those of almost all of Esau's sons (Gen. 36: 10-14; <sup>1</sup> Ch. 1 : 35-7)- A South Arabian would have but little difficulty in understanding the first verse of Hebrew Genesis.<sup>4</sup> The rudiments of the Hebrew religion, modern research shows, point to a beginning in the desert.

On their way to Palestine from Egypt about 1225 B.C. the Hebrew (Rachel) tribes sojourned about forty years in Sinai and the Nufud. In Midian, the southern part of Sinai and the land east of it, the divine covenant was made. Moses married an Arabian woman, the daughter of a Midianite priest,<sup>5</sup> a worshipper of Jehovah who instructed Moses in the new cult. Yahu (Yahweh, Jehovah) was apparently a Midianite or North Arabian tribal deity. He was a desert god, simple and austere. His abode was a tent and his ritual was by no means elaborate. His worship consisted in desert feasts and sacrifices and burnt offerings from among the herds.<sup>6</sup> The Hebrews entered Palestine as nomads; the heritage of their tribal life from desert ancestors continued to be well marked long after they had settled among, and become civilized by, the native Canaanites.

The Hebrew kingdom in its heyday included the Sinaitic

<sup>1</sup> Bk. III, ch. 88.

<sup>a</sup> G. A. Cooke, A Text-Book of North-Semitic Inscriptions (Oxford, 1903), pp. 195-6.

<sup>8</sup> Hos. 9 : 10; Jer. 2 : 2; Deut. 32: 10, etc.

<sup>4</sup> B. Moritz in *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, n. ser., vol. iii (1926), pp. 81 seq., D. S. Margoliouth, *The Relations between Arabs and Israelites* (London, 1924), pp. 8, 15. Consult James A. Montgomery, *Arabia and the Bible* (Philadelphia, 1934), pp. 149 seq.

<sup>6</sup> Ex. 3:1, 18 : 10-12.

<sup>4</sup> Ex. 3 : 18, 5 : 1; Num. 10 :

35-6. peninsula. Solomon had his fleet in the Gulf of al-'Aqabah. Ophir, whence the navy of Hiram and Solomon brought gold, algum and precious stones (1 K. 9 : 27-8, 10 : 11; 2 Ch. 9 : 10), was probably Zafar in 'Uman. By the time of Job (22 : 24) Ophir had become a synonym for a gold-producing land. Over a century after Solomon, Jehoshaphat (873-849 B.C.) still held sway over Elath (Ezion-geber, modern al-'Aqabah) and the trade routes leading thither and received tribute from the Arabians who "brought him flocks" (2 Ch. 17 : 11). In reporting his third campaign, directed (701) against Syria-Palestine, Sennacherib proclaims: "As for Hezekiah, the terrifying splendor of my majesty overcame him and the Urbi (Arabs) and his mercenary (?) troops which he had brought in to strengthen Jerusalem, his royal city, deserted him".<sup>1</sup> Hezekiah (1 Ch. 4 : 41), and before him Uzziah (2 Ch. 26 : 7), fought against the Minaeans in and around the oasis of Ma'in (modern Maan). Uzziah (792-740 B.C.) restored Elath to Judah and rebuilt the town (2 K. 14 : 22). The Chronicler (2 Ch. 21 : 16, 17) reports a South Arabian raid against Judah which resulted in the loss of King Jehoram's (848—844 B.C.) sons, wives and treasures, although it is difficult to see how distant Sabaeans, "the Arabians, that were near the Ethiopians", could have carried out such a raid. By the time of Nehemiah,<sup>2</sup> in the middle of the fifth century B.C., the Jews were beginning to look upon their south-eastern neighbours as enemies.

Etymologically 'Arab is a Semitic word meaning "desert" or Biblical the inhabitant thereof with no reference to nationality. In this association, the word is used in the Old

sense Hebrew Ereb is used in Is. 21 : 13, 13 : 20 and Jer. 3 : 2. Testament In the Koran arab is used for Bedouins. Second Mac. 12 : 10 references makes Arabs and nomads synonymous. The first certain instance of the biblical use of the word as a proper name occurs in Jer. 25 : 24: "kings of Arabia". Jeremiah's prophetic career fell between 626 and 586 B.C. The "kings" referred to were in all probability sheikhs of northern Arabia and the Syrian Desert. By the third century B.C. the term was beginning to be used for any inhabitant of the peninsula, for 2 Ch. 21 : 16 makes mention of "the Arabians, that were near the Ethiopians", leaving no doubt that the people whom the writer had in mind were the Arabians of the south-west, i.e. Sabaeans. Of the four best-

<sup>1</sup> Luckenbill, vol. ii, § 240.

\* Neh. 2 : 19, 4 : 7.

known kingdoms of ancient Arabia, viz. Saba', Ma'in, Hadramawt and Qataban, the first three—and these were the important ones—are mentioned in the Old Testament. In the commercial chapter of Ezekiel (j\* after 572 B.C.) Arabia is coupled with Kedar, and the articles of merchandise listed are exactly what we would expect in the way of products from Arabia. From verse 21 in this chapter (27), we learn that the Arabians of the sixth century B.C. were engaged, as they are still engaged today, in breeding cattle which they sold to the neighbouring settlers. From Jer. 3:2 it is also evident that they were then notorious for highway robbery. Jer. 25 : 23 (American Revised) indicates that they had their heads shaved except for a tuft at the top, a practice similar to that of the Bedouins today.

Dedan (Ar. Daydan), referred to and mentioned repeatedly in the Old Testament (Is. 21 : 13; Jer. 25 : 23; Ezek. 25 : 13), is modern al-*Ula*, an oasis in northern al-Hijaz. For some time it was the headquarters of the Sabaeans in the northern part of the peninsula. At the height of their commercial power the Sabaeans evidently exercised control over the transport routes leading through al-Hijaz northward to the Mediterranean ports and had colonies planted along these routes.

The Kedar (Heb. Qedar) mentioned by Ezekiel,<sup>1</sup> the “Kidri” of the Assyrian annals<sup>2</sup> and the “Cedrei”<sup>3</sup> of classical literature, held sway over North Arabia. Palmyrena with the region southeast of Damascus was their habitat.

The Shunammite damsel whose beauty is immortalized in the Song ascribed to Solomon (6:13, 1 : 5; cf. 1 K. 1 : 3) was probably an Arabian of the Kedar tribe. If historical, the Queen of Sheba (Arabic BilqTs), who brought to the wise king of Israel gifts of unique value characteristic of South Arabia (1 K. 10 : 10; 2 Ch. 9 : 9), must have had her headquarters neither in al-Yaman nor in Ethiopia, but in one of those Sabaean posts or garrisons .in the north on the caravan route. Not until two centuries after the age of Solomon (ca. 1000 B.C.) do the Yamanite kings begin to figure in inscriptions.

In Job 6 : 19 the Sheba (Ar. Saba') are associated with Tema (Tayma'). Job, the author of the finest piece of poetry that the ancient Semitic world produced, was an Arab, not a Jew, as tne

<sup>1</sup> See also Is. 21 : 16; Gen. 25 : 13.  
vol. ii, §§ 820, 869.

<sup>3</sup> Luckenbill,

' Pliny, Bk. V, ch. 12.

form of his name {Iyyob, Ar. Ayyub'}) and the scene of his book, North Arabia, indicate.<sup>1</sup> The appendix to the Book of Proverbs contains the wise sayings <sup>2</sup> of Agur son of Jakeh (Prov. 30 : i) and of Lemuel (Prov. 31 : 1), the two kings of Massa, a tribe of Ishmael (Gen. 25 : 14). The names of these two persons occur in some form in certain Minaean and other ancient South Arabic inscriptions. In Baruch 3 : 23 there is a reference to "the Agarenes [sons of Agar = Hagar, i.e. Ishmaelites or North Arabians] that seek wisdom upon earth".

"Qedem" and "Bene Qedem" of the Old Testament, rendered in the English versions (Gen. 29: 1; Num. 23 : 7; Is. 11 : 14; Jud. 6 : 33; Ezek. 25 : 4; Job 1 : 3) "east", "children of the east", "people of the east", etc., correspond to Arabic sharq and sharqzyun (east and easterners). In particular, the terms mean the land and the Bedouins east of Palestine; in general, Arabia and the Arabians. "Saracen" comes from this same Arabic stem and is one of a half-dozen words of Arabic origin which occur in Old English, this word being used as early as the ninth century. It had had a history of its own before the rise of Islam and can be applied to others besides Arabians and Arabs.<sup>3</sup> Job, whose book is considered a masterpiece of wisdom as well as poetry, was a chief of the Bene Qedem (Job 1 : 3). In wisdom Solomon alone excelled this tribe (1 K. 4 : 30). The "wise men from the east" (Matt. 2 : 1), therefore, who followed the star to Jerusalem were possibly Bedouins from the North Arabian desert rather than Magi from Persia.

In the post-exilic literature the word Arab usually signifies Nabataean (2 Mac. 5 : 8; 1 Mac. 5 : 39). First Maccabees 9 : 35 mentions the Nabataeans as such. At the time of Paul the Nabataean kingdom extended as far north as Damascus. The Arabia to which Paul retired (Gal. 1:17) was undoubtedly



some desert tract in the Nabataean district. The Arabians in Acts 2:11 were also in all probability Nabataeans.

<sup>1</sup> Certain technicalities of biblical Hebrew poetry, including parallelism, as illustrated in Job resemble Arabic poetical technique: in both cases the verse is a couplet consisting of two parts which complement each other either appositionally or antithetically. In the Middle Ages Hebrew grammar was modelled after Arabic grammar.

\* Cf. with those of Luqman, Koran 31 : 11.

<sup>3</sup> In this book, therefore, such terms as “history of the Saracens”, “Saracenic art” “Saracenic architecture”, etc., have been avoided. An attempt has been made to use “Arabian” for an inhabitant of the peninsula and “Arab” for any Arabic-speaking person, particularly if a Moslem. To Moslems “Muhammadan” is objectionable.

## 6. In classical literature

Arabia and the Arabians were familiar to the Greeks and Romans. The country lay across their path to India and China and produced commodities highly prized in the markets of the west. Its inhabitants were the middlemen of the southern seas, as their kinsmen, the Phoenicians, had been earlier of the Mediterranean.

The classical writers divided the land into Arabia Felix, Arabia Petraea and Arabia Deserta, corresponding to the tripartite political division of the land in the first Christian century, the first being independent, the second subject to Rome and the third nominally controlled in part by Parthia. Arabia Deserta included the Syro-Mesopotamian desert (the Badiyah). Arabia Petraea (the rocky) centred on Sinai and the Nabataean kingdom, having Petra for its capital. Arabia

Felix comprised the rest of the Arabian peninsula, the interior of which was then but little known. Its restriction to the Yaman, the region best known to Europe, was a medieval error. The name itself, meaning “happy”, may have been an attempt to translate Ar. yaman (to the right hand), confused with yumn, happiness. The district was called Yaman because it lay to the right side, i.e. south of al-Hijaz, in opposition to al-Sha’m, i.e. Syria, which lay to the left or north.<sup>1</sup> Marcian (ca. A.D. 400) of Heraclea<sup>2</sup> uses the term “Saraceni”. Before Marcian, Ptolemy,<sup>3</sup> who flourished in the first half of the second century of our era, refers to the Saracens. Ammianus Marcellinus,<sup>4</sup> a native of Antioch who wrote in the latter half of the fourth Christian century, identifies the Saracens with the Scenite Arabs.

The first mention of the Arabians in Greek literature was made by Aeschylus<sup>6</sup> (525-456 B.C.), the reference being to a distinguished Arabian officer in the army of Xerxes. Herodotus<sup>6</sup> (ca. 484-425 B.C.) follows with a reference to the Arabians in Xerxes’ army, who were evidently from eastern Egypt.

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<sup>1</sup> The “Sabaei” (Sabaeans), “Minaei” (Minaeans), “Homeritae” (Himyarites), Scenitae” (tent-dwellers = Bedouins), “Nabataei” (Nabataeans), “Catabanei”

(Qatabanites), “Chatramotitae” (people of Hadramawt), “Omanitae” (\*Umanites), “Sachalitae” (inhabitants of the Sahil, i.e. the coast-line, in this case the southern coast-line, medieval al-Shihr)—all these figure in Greek and Roman geographies and histories.

<sup>2</sup> *Periplus of the Outer Sea*, tr. Wilfred H. Schoff (Philadelphia, 1927), § 17a.

<sup>2</sup> Geographia, ed. Carolus F. A. Nobbe, vol. ii (Leipzig, 1887), Bk. V, ch. 17, § 3.

<sup>4</sup> Reruin gestarum, Bk. XXII, ch. 15, § 2; Bk. XXIII, ch. 6, § 13.

<sup>5</sup> Persians, 1. 320.

<sup>4</sup> Bk. VII, § 69.

To the classical authors from the Greek Eratosthenes (f ca. 196 B.C.)—the source of Strabo—to the Roman Pliny (f A.D. 79) Arabia is a land of fabulous wealth and luxury; it is the country of frankincense and other spices; its people love and enjoy liberty. Indeed, what particularly struck Western writers was the characteristic last mentioned. The independent character of



From Heinrich Kiepert, "Atlas antiquus"

## ARABIA OF THE CLASSICAL AUTHORS

the Arabian people has formed a theme of praise and admiration for European authors from the remotest times to the days of Gibbon.<sup>1</sup>

That the Arabians themselves were conscious of those superior advantages which their natural environment

afforded may be inferred from the debate with the Persian Chosroes in the presence of the Byzantine, Indian and Chinese deputies, in the

<sup>1</sup> Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. J. B. Bury (London, 1898), vol. v, p. 319.

Roman expedition

The aromatic land

course of which the Arab delegation brought out as eloquently and forcefully as possible the points in which their nation excelled.<sup>1</sup> Diodorus Siculus<sup>2</sup> (fl. 2nd half of 1st cent. B.C.) affirms that the Arabians “highly prize and value their liberty”. In his *Geography*? Strabo (j\* A.D. 24), on the authority of an earlier Greek, states that the Arabians were the only people who did not send their ambassadors to Alexander, who had planned “to make Arabia the seat of empire”.<sup>4</sup>

Masters of the world, as they were, the Romans failed to fasten the yoke upon Arabian necks. Their famous expedition of 10,000 men conducted from Egypt under the leadership of its prefect Aelius Gallus in 24 B.C., during the reign of Augustus Caesar, and supported by their Nabataean allies, proved a signal failure. Its object was admittedly to capture those transport routes monopolized by the South Arabians and tap the resources of al-Yaman for the benefit of Rome. After months of southward penetration the decimated army turned back to “Negrana” (Najrán), which it had captured previously, made the coast of the Red Sea and ferried across to the Egyptian shore. The return trip took sixty days. The farthest point in Arabia reached was “Mariaba”, which was probably not Ma’rib the Sabaeen metropolis but Mariama to the south-east. The

celebrated Greek geographer Strabo, historian of the expedition and himself the personal friend of Gallus, blames the many misfortunes on the perfidy of its guide, "Syllaeus the minister of the Nabataeans".<sup>6</sup> Thus ended ignominiously the first, and indeed the last, military campaign of major importance that any European power ever ventured to conduct in inland Arabia.

To Herodotus<sup>8</sup> "the whole of Arabia exhales a most delicious fragrance", it being "the only country which produces frankincense, myrrh, cassia, cinnamon and ladanum. . . . The trees which bear the frankincense are guarded by winged serpents, small in size and of varied colours, whereof vast numbers hang about every tree."<sup>7</sup> But the geographer Strabo is slightly more judicious than the over-credulous "father of history". To him also South Arabia is "the aromatic country",<sup>8</sup> but its "snakes, a

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-'Abd-Rabbihi, *al-'Iqd al-Farid* (Cairo, 1302), vol. i, p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> *Bibliotheca histórica*, Bk. II, ch. 1, § 5.

\* Bk. XVI, ch. 1, § 11.

<sup>4</sup> Bk. XVI, ch. 4, § 27.

• Bk. XVI, ch. 4, § 23.

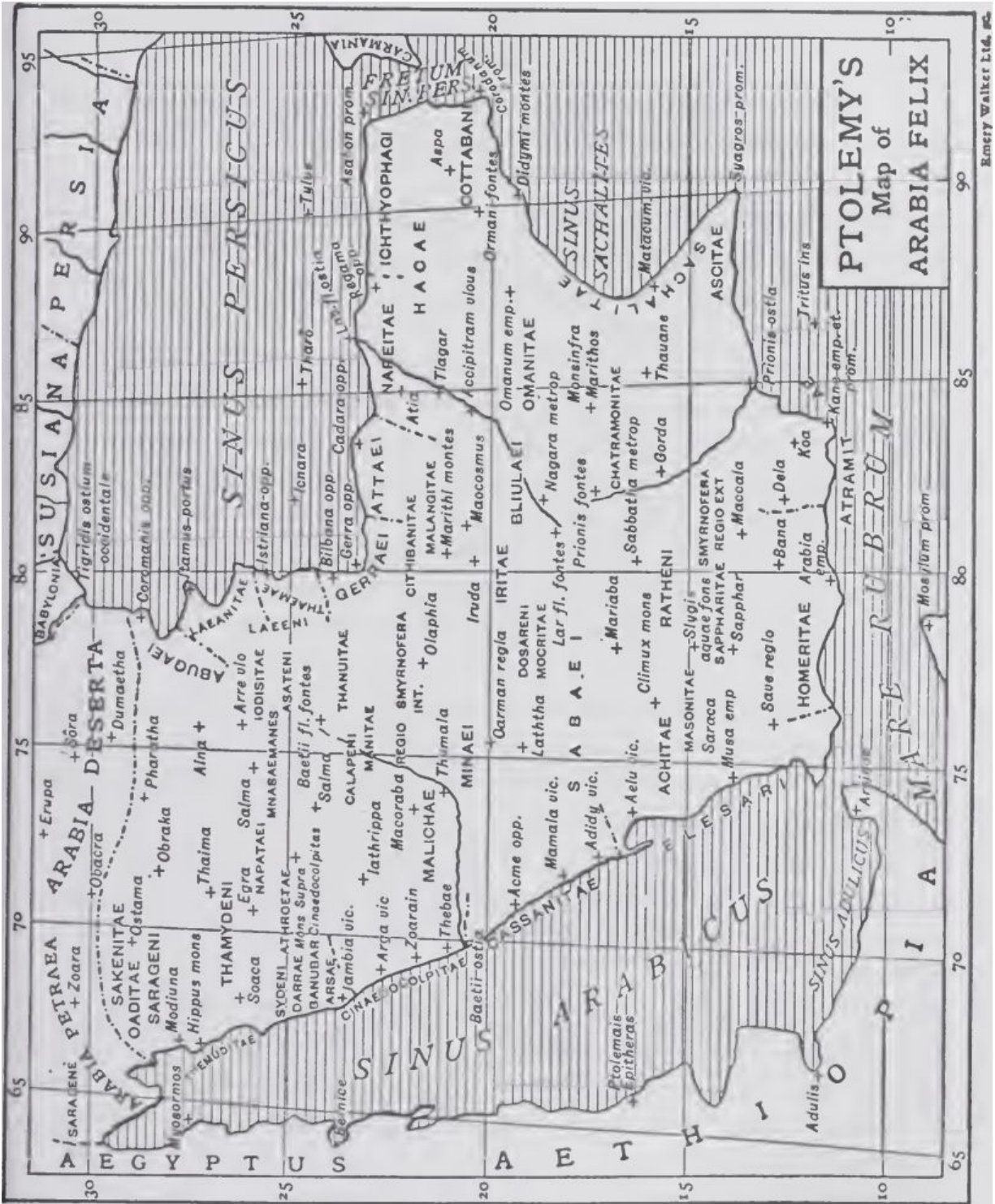
• Bk. III, ch. 113.

' Bk. III, ch. 107.

• Bk. XVI, ch. 4, § 25.

span in length, spring up as high as a man's waist".<sup>6</sup>

Diodorus Siculus<sup>2</sup> reiterates the same view of Arabia as a spice-producing



land the very soil of which is redolent. Pliny, who in his Natural History (Bk. VI) summarizes the Roman knowledge



of the Eastern countries as of A.D. 70, also emphasizes this characteristic

■ Bk. II, ch. 49, §§ 2-3

of the land<sup>1</sup> and adds, in another connection, that the Sabaei are “the best known of all the tribes of Arabia on account of their frankincense”.<sup>2</sup> Clearly Hadramawt was in those days the frankincense land par excellence. The Greeks and Romans evidently presumed that all the commodities in which the Arabians dealt were native products of their own land, so jealously did the merchants guard the secrets of their other sources in Abyssinia and India and so strict was the monopoly.

Those same classical writers were greatly impressed by the wealth of the South Arabians. Strabo<sup>3</sup> mentions cities “adorned with beautiful temples and palaces”. Pliny,<sup>4</sup> using Aelius Gallus for authority, concurs.

## Gold

While frankincense and spices were the products for which the land was most famous, almost equally prized were the mineral deposits, particularly gold, found along the western coast of the peninsula from Midian to al-Yaman and to some extent in the central portion of the land. Diodorus® asserts that Arabia possessed mines of gold so pure that no smelting was necessary. Al-Maqdisi<sup>6</sup> and al-Hamdāni<sup>7</sup> (tenth century) devote a paragraph each to the minerals of Arabia, emphasizing particularly its gold.

Other treasured scraps of information are embedded in the Greek and Latin records. Strabo<sup>8</sup> tells us that in South Arabia polyandry of the type in which a number of brothers married the same wife prevailed, that people lived



incestuously and that the law of primogeniture, by which the eldest became the chief, was observed. He further states that the greater part of their wine was made of dates and that instead of olive oil sesame oil was used.<sup>9</sup>

In his geography, written between A.D. 150 and 160, Ptolemy, whose projection of the known world was to determine the geographical ideas of both Europeans and Asians for many centuries to come, gives us the result of an attempt to put into scientific form the records and personal impressions of merchants and travellers of his time. His map of Arabia is the first sketch based on such information.

<sup>1</sup> Bk. XII, ch. 30.      \* Bk. VI, ch. 32.      ' Bk. XVI, ch. 4, § 3.

<sup>4</sup> Bk. VI, ch. 32.      ' Bk. II, ch. 50, § 1.

• Ahsan al-Taqa'sim, ed. de Goeje (Leyden, 1877), PP- iOi-2.

<sup>7</sup> Sifatjazarat al- Arab, ed. D. H. Müller (Leyden, 1884), pp. 153\*4«

<sup>8</sup> Bk. XVI, ch. 4, § 25.      \* Ibid. § 26; Pliny, Bk. VI, ch. 32.

## CHAPTER V

### THE SABAEAN AND OTHER STATES OF SOUTH ARABIA

The Sabaeans were the first Arabians to step within the South threshold of civilization. They figure in the late cuneiform in- Arabians scriptions. The oldest reference to them in Greek literature is Sants in Theophrastus (f 288 B.C.), Historia plantarum^ The southwestern corner of the peninsula was the early home of the Sabaeans.

The fertility of that felicitous rain-favoured land, its proximity to the sea and its strategic location on the India route were all determining factors in its development. Here were produced spices, myrrh and other aromata for seasoning foods or burning in the ceremonial of the court and the ritual of the church; foremost among these was incense, that most valuable commodity of ancient trade. Thither did rare and highly prized products, such as pearls from the Persian Gulf, condiments, fabrics and swords from India, silk from China, slaves, monkeys, ivory, gold and ostrich feathers from Ethiopia, find their way in transit to Western marts. The author of *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*<sup>2</sup> has left us (A.D. 50-60) a bird's-eye view of the market of "Muza", present-day Mukha (Mocha):

The merchandise imported there consists of purple cloths, both fine and coarse; clothing in the Arabian style, with sleeves; plain, ordinary, embroidered, or interwoven with gold; saffron, sweet rush, muslins' cloaks, blankets (not many), some plain and others made in the local fashion; sashes of different colors, fragrant ointments in moderate quantity, wine and wheat, not much.

The Sabaeans were the Phoenicians of the southern sea. They knew its routes, reefs and harbours, mastered its treacherous monsoons and thus monopolized its trade during the last millennium and a quarter before our era. The circumnavigation of Arabia, stated as a theoretical possibility by Alexander's admiral, Nearchus, was in their case an actuality. To the Greco-Roman

<sup>1</sup> Bk. IX, ch. 4, § 2.  
§ 24.

\* Tr. W. H. Schoff (New York, 1912),

pilots the frankincense country was “mountainous and forbidding”.<sup>1</sup> “Navigation”, according to the Periplus? “is dangerous along this whole coast of Arabia, which is without harbors, with bad anchorages, foul, inaccessible because of breakers and rocks, and terrible in every way.”

Through the Red Sea the main maritime route led from Bāb al-Mandab to Wādi al-Hammāmāt on the coast of Middle Egypt. The inherent difficulty of navigating this sea, especially in its northern parts, caused the Sabaean to develop land routes between al-Yaman and Syria along the western coast of the peninsula, leading through Makkah and Petra and forking at the northern end to Egypt, Syria and Mesopotamia. The Syrian branch strikes the Mediterranean outlet at Ghazzah (Gaza). From Hadramawt, particularly rich in frankincense, a caravan road led to Ma’rib, the Sabaean capital, where it joined the main commercial artery. Along this south-to-north route a number of Sabaean colonies were planted. From these may have come the Sabaean who figured in the Assyrian and Hebrew records. An historical snapshot has been preserved for us in Gen. 37 : 25 of a “caravan of Ishmaelites” coming down “from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh”.

### South Arabic inscriptions

The conquests which the South Arabians achieved were in commerce and trade. The kingdoms they built were not military states. The outline of their history can be delineated from such references as those cited above in the ancient Semitic and Greco-Roman writings, from the semi-legendary traditions preserved in early Moslem literature—particularly the works of Wahb ibn-Munabbih (fl. San’ā’, ca. A.D. 728), al-Hamdāni<sup>3</sup> (fl. A.D. 945) and al-Himyari (fl. A.D. 1177)—but above all from the local sources made accessible mainly through the discoveries of Halcyon and Glaser. All this native

South Arabian literature, however, is epigraphic—on metal and stone. Whatever perishable material was used for recording business transactions, historical narratives, or strictly literary productions has entirely disappeared. The earliest inscriptions found are mostly boustro-

<sup>1</sup> Erythraean Sea, § 29.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. § 20; D. H. Müller, *Die Burgen und Schlösser Südarabiens nach dem Iklil des Hamdāni*, 2. pts. (Vienna, 1879-81).

<sup>3</sup> Bk. VIII, ed. Nabih A. Faris (Princeton, 1940); *The Antiquities of South Arabia* (Princeton, 1938); Bk. X, ed. Muhibb-al-Din al-Khatib (Cairo, 1368).

CH.v SABAEAN AND OTHER STATES OF SOUTH ARABIA 51  
phedon, dating from the eighth or ninth century B.C. The inscriptions may be classified as follows: (1) votive, engraved on tablets of bronze placed in the temples and dedicated to Almaqah (Ilmuqah), 'Athtar and Shams; (2) architectural, occurring on the walls of the temples and other public edifices to commemorate the name of the builder of or the contributor to the construction; (3) historical, reporting a battle or announcing a victory; (4) police ordinances, inscribed on pillars in the entry; (5) funerary, attached to sepulchres. Of special significance are a few legal documents which reveal a long constitutional development.

Carsten Niebuhr was the first to announce (1772) the existence of South Arabic inscriptions. Joseph Halévy, who since Aelius

( zupperai tD a Ttrnplf

Entrance on which is the following Inscription

««YD^hniixorsH-is'diMio aMhiiboaimDiihirwiY

From "Journal of the Royal Geographical Society" (1837)

THE RUINS OF NAQAB AL-HAJAR AND TWO LINES OF  
INSCRIPTION WHICH FURNISHED EUROPE WITH ITS FIRST  
SIGHT OF SOUTH ARABIC INSCRIPTION

Gallus (24 B.C.) was the first European to visit Najran in al-Yaman (1869-70), brought back copies of 685 inscriptions from thirty-seven different localities. Between 1882 and 1894 Eduard Glaser undertook four scientific expeditions to al-Yaman which yielded some 2000 inscriptions, of which some are still unpublished. In all we possess today about 4000 such inscriptions, extending in date as far back as the seventh century B.C. Th. S. Arnaud, who discovered the ruins of Ma'rib, copied in 1843 at the risk of his life about sixty inscriptions. James R. Wellsted, an English naval officer, published in 1837 a part of the inscription of Naqab al-Hajar and this furnished Europe with its second sight of South Arabian writing. The decipherment was accomplished by Emil Rodiger of Halle (1837) and by Gesenius (1841).

As revealed by these inscriptions, the South Arabic or Minaeo-Sabaeen language (also called Himyarite) has twenty-nine letters in its alphabet. The characters represent in all probability an early forking from the Sinaitic, which constitutes the connecting link between the Phoenician alphabet and its Egyptian ancestor. These symmetrical rectilinear letters (al-musnad') point to a long development.<sup>1</sup> Its alphabet, like other Semitic forms, consists of consonants only. In noun formation, verb conjugation, personal pronouns

and vocabulary, South Arabic has certain affinities with Akkadian (Assyro-Babylonian) and Ethiopie (Abyssinian). But it has the broken plural which characterizes North Arabic and Ethiopie. Akkadian, South Arabic and Ethiopie represent in certain respects the older form of Semitic speech. With the decay of the Yamanite culture South Arabic practically disappeared and North Arabic was substituted. The literary fairs of the north, such as the Süq 'Ukâz, the annual heathen pilgrimage to the Ka'bah and the commercial relations with Makkah hastened the process of substitution.

i. The

Sabaeen kingdom

The first major kingdoms discernible through the mists of South Arabian antiquity were the Sabaeen and the Minaean, which during a considerable part of their history were contemporaries. Both kingdoms began as theocracies and ended as secular kinships.

The Sabaeans were the most distinguished branch of the entire South Arabian family. Saba\*, biblical Sheba, their original homeland, lay south of Najrân in the Yaman district. The Sabaeen period, according to the school of Arabists who hold for the low (or short) chronology extended from about 750 B.C. to 115 B.C. with a change in the royal title at about 610 B.C.; the Minaean from about 700 B.C., to the third pre-Christian century.<sup>2</sup> Mukarrib<sup>3</sup> was the title of the priest-king who stood at the head of the state. Two early Sabaeen mukarribs, Yatha'-amar and Kariba-il, are cited in the royal Assyrian annals of Sargon II and Sennacherib<sup>4</sup> and must have reigned in the late eighth and

D. G. Hogarth, *The Penetration of Arabia* (New York, 1904), p. 7.

[2](#)

\* On the distinction between Arabians and Arabs (Arabic-speaking peoples) as used in this book see below, p. 43, n. 3.

[3](#)

*Mu'jam al-Buldan*, ed. F. Wiistenfeld (Leipzig, 1866-73), index.

[4](#)

*Futuh al-Buldan*, ed. de Goeje (Leyden, 1866), pp. 53-5; tr. Philip K. Hitti, *The Origins of the Islamic State* (New York, 1916, reprint Beirut, 1966), pp. 82-4.

[5](#)

Ibn-Sa'd, *Kitab al'Tabaqat al-Kabir*, ed. Eduard Sachau, vol. iii, pt. I (Leyden, 1904), p. 246, l. 3.

[6](#)

Bk. XVI, ch. 4, § 19,

<sup>1</sup> For specimens see Corpus inscriptionum Semiticarum, pars iv (Paris, 1889 ff.).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Nielsen, Handbuch, vol. i, pp. 64 seq.\ F. V. Winnett in Bulletin, American

Schools of Oriental Research, no. 73 (1939), pp. 3-9; G. Ryckmans in Bulletin, School of Oriental and African Studies, vol. xiv (1952), pp. 1 seq.', Jacques Ryckmans, L' Institution monarchique en Arabie méridionale avant l'islam (Louvain, 1951)» pp. 257 seq.

<sup>3</sup> MK RB, vocalization uncertain.

<sup>4</sup> See above, pp. 37-8.

l Sinaitic	1 South I Arabic	Phoenician	Ra's al- Shamrah	Later Greek	Latin	Arabic
1	r*1		lf	A	A	1
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Constructed with the aid of G. Vinton Dufteld

## A TABLE OF ALPHABETS, INCLUDING RA'S AL-SHAMRAH CUNEIFORM

Ma'rib dam

### 2. The Minaean kingdom

early seventh century. In their heyday the kings of Saba' extended their hegemony over all South Arabia reducing their neighbour, the Minaean kingdom, to a state of vassalage. Sir-wah, a day's journey west of Ma'rib, was the capital of Saba . Its principal building was the temple of Almaqah, the moon-god.<sup>1</sup> Its principal ruins, now called al-Kharibah, house a village of a hundred persons. An inscription records that its surrounding wall was built by

Yada'-il, an early mukarrib. Another inscription records the victorious campaigns of Kariba-il Watar (ca. 450 B.C.), who first assumed the title “MLK [king of] Saba”.

In the second period of the Sabaean kingdom (ca. 610-115 B.C.) the ruler appears shorn of his priestly character. Ma'rib, some sixty miles east of San'a', then became the capital. This city lay 3900 feet above the sea. It has been visited by only a few Europeans, first among whom were Arnaud, Halevy and Glaser. It was the meeting-place of the trade routes connecting the frankincense lands with the Mediterranean ports, particularly Ghazzah. Al-Hamdani in his I kill<sup>2</sup> refers to three citadels in Ma'rib, but the construction for which the city was particularly famous was the great dam, Sadd Ma'rib.<sup>3</sup> This remarkable engineering feat, together with the other public works of the Sabaean, reveal to us a peace-loving society highly advanced not only in commerce but in technical accomplishment as well. The older portions of the dam were constructed in the midseventh pre-Christian century. The inscriptions make Sum-hu'alay Yanuf and his son Yatha'-amar Bayyin the main builders and cite restorations in the time of Sharahbi-Il Ya'fur (A.D. 449-450) and Abraha the Abyssinian (A.D. 543). But al-Hamdani, and after him al-Mas'udi,<sup>4</sup> al-Isfahani<sup>5</sup> and Yaqut,<sup>6</sup> regard Luqman ibn-'Ad, a mythical personage, as the builder.

The Minaean kingdom flourished in the Jawf of al-Yaman and in its heyday included most of South Arabia. The original Arabic form Ma'an (biblical Maon, Me'un, Me'in as a place name) was later vocalized Ma'm, meaning spring-water. The name survives in present-day Ma'an (south-east of Petra), an important colony on the northern trade route. Minaean inscriptions near al-'Ula<sup>1</sup> and Tabuk attest the existence of several colonies in this region serving as warehouses and relay posts. The Minaean capital Qarnaw,

visited by Halevy in 1870, is modern Ma'In (in southern al-Jawf, north-east of San'a\*). The religious metropolis, Yathll, also in southern al-Jawf, is present-day Baraqish, north-west of Ma'rib. The Minaeans spoke the same language as the later Sabaeans, with only dialectal differences. The so-called Minaean inscriptions include the Qatabanian royal inscriptions and few Hadramawt texts. Carvings in the temple ruins of al-Hazm, provincial capital of al-Jawf, represent suspended vessels, probably wine offerings, gazelles and other sacrificial animals, snakes which were divine symbols, dancing girls who were temple servants, and ostriches evidently kept in sacred parks.

Other than the Minaean and Sabaean kingdoms two other 3. Qataban important states arose in this area Qataban and Hadramawt. The land of Qataban lay east of the site of 'Adan, that of mawt Hadramawt about where it is today. The Qataban monarchy,<sup>2</sup> whose capital was Tamna' (now Kuhlān), lasted from about 400-50 B.C.; that of Hadramawt, whose capital was Shabwah (classical Sabota), lasted from the mid-fifth century before Christ to the end of the first Christian century. At times these kingdoms were under Sabaean and Minaean hegemony. Arab historians knew nothing about all these peoples whose inscriptions extend from North Arabia to Ethiopia, who organized the spice trade and undertook amazing public works.

From 115 B.C. onwards the entire area falls under new masters 4- The who stemmed from the southwestern highlands, the tribe of kingdom<sup>6</sup> Himyar. Thence the civilization is referred to as Himyarite, though the royal title remains "king of Saba\* and dhu-Raydan". Raydan later became known as Qataban. This marks the beginning of the first Himyarite kingdom, which lasted till about A.D. 300. The word "Homeritae" occurs first in The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea (about A.D. 60) and then in Pliny. The

<sup>1</sup> Lihyänite capital ca. 500-300 B.C. See above, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Cf Phillips, p. 247. For a list of kings see Müller, *Die Burgen*, pt. 2, pp. 60-67:

G. Ryckmans, *Les noms propres sud-sémitiques*, vol. i (Louvain, 1934), pp. 36 seq.-,

H. St. J. B. Philby, *The Background of Islam* (Alexandria, 1947), pp. 143-4.

Himyarites were close kinsmen of the Sabaeans and, as the youngest branch of the stock, became the inheritors of the Minaeo-Sabaeen culture and trade. Their language was practically the same as that of the Sabaeans and Minaeans before them. Piiny's references to agriculture are confirmed by the wells, dams and cisterns repeatedly mentioned in the inscriptions. The collection of frankincense, considered a religious act, was still the source of greatest income.

Zafar (classical Sapphar and Saphar, Sephar of Gen. io : 30), the inland town, about one hundred miles north-east of Mukha on the road to San'a', was the capital of the I^imyarite dynasty. It displaced Ma'rib of the Sabaeans and Qarnaw of the Minaeans.



British Museum

## HIMYARITE SILVER COIN

Obv. male head with monogram; rev. male head with inscription reading krb'l wtr (Kariba-ilu Watar)

Ca. A.D. 50

Its ruins can still be seen on the summit of a circular hill near the modern town of Yarim. At the time of the composition of The Periplus its king was Kariba-il Watar (Charibael of The Periplus).

It was during this Himyarite period that the ill-fated Roman column under Aelius Gallus penetrated as far as Mariama. The "Ilasarus" of Strabo, who was the ruler at that time, is Ili-shariha Yahdub of the inscriptions.

The

Semitic origin of the Abyssinian\*

Another notable occurrence in the early part of this period was the establishment of Arabian colonists from al-Yaman and Hadramawt in the "land of Cush", where they laid the basis of the Abyssinian kingdom and civilization and ultimately developed a culture which the native negroes could probably never have achieved. The displacement of South Arabian tribes about the middle of the fifth century of our era (connected by popular tradition with the breaking of the great dam of Ma'rib), which

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carried some to Syria and al-Traq, may have resulted in augmenting the earlier South Arabian settlements in Abyssinia. Along the whole coast of East Africa there was an

infusion of Arabian blood of far earlier origin than the Moslem invasion. The beginnings of the kingdom of Aksum (Axum), the original The nucleus of later Abyssinia, belong to the first century after ½In Christ.

To another Ili-shariha (Lisharh ibn-Yahsub of Yaqut<sup>1</sup>), of the first century after Christ, is ascribed the most celebrated castle of “the land of castles”, as al-Yaman has been called, Ghumdan in San\*a’. As a measure of protection against Bedouin raids the urban Himyarites found it necessary to erect well-fortified palaces. Al-Hamdani, and following him Yaqut, have left us detailed descriptions of Ghumdan, though by their time it was but a gigantic ruin. The citadel, according to these geographers, had twenty stories, each ten cubits high—the first skyscraper in recorded history. It was built of granite, porphyry and marble. The king had his court installed in the uppermost story, the roof of which was covered with one slab of stone so transparent that one could look through it skyward and distinguish between a crow and a kite. The four facades were constructed of stones of various colours. At each corner-stone stood a brazen lion which roared whenever the wind blew. In a poem al-Hamdani refers to the clouds as the turban of Ghumdan and marble as its belt. The structure survived until the rise of Islam and was apparently destroyed in the course of the struggle which established Moslem supremacy in al-Yaman.

The king of this first Himyarite period appears as a feudal lord, residing in a castle, owning land and issuing coins of gold, silver and copper, with his image on one side and an owl (the Athenian emblem) or a bull’s head on the other. Certain older coins bear the head of Athena and show South Arabian dependence on Athenian models as early as the fourth century before our era. Besides coins, bronze figures of Hellenistic and Sasanid workmanship are occasionally

unearthed in al-Yaman. Native art shows no high antiquity. Semitic genius nowhere expressed itself through such a channel.

The social organization of the Sabaean-Himyarite community as revealed by the inscriptions represents a curious blend of the

<sup>1</sup> Bulddn, vol. iii, p. 811, 1. 8.

old tribal system, caste stratification and feudal aristocracy and monarchy, presenting phenomena many of which may be duplicated elsewhere but which in their aggregate seem unique.

The            the course of this first Himyarite period the zenith of the

Romans South Arabian power was passed. So long- as the Yamanites monopolized the maritime trade of the Red Sea they prospered; Arabians but <sub>now</sub> the control was slipping out of their hands. The Peritime trade plus of the Erythraean Sea (A.D. 50—60), the first record of organized trading with the East in vessels built and commanded by subjects of a Western power, marks the turning-point of the tide of commerce. The great overland route through the Fertile Crescent and connecting Europe with India, which was a source





British Museum

### HIMYARITE SILVER COIN

Obv. head of Athena, on her cheek Sabaean letter nùn\ rev. owl, with olive spray and crescent. Coin belongs to 3rd or 2nd cent. B.C., imitation of the old Attic type of 4th cent. B.C.

of endless friction between the Parthian and Roman empires, had been threatened before this time by Alexander; but the southern maritime route to India remained in the hands of Arabians until almost the first century after Christ. Their task consisted in collecting the products of their own land together with those of East Africa and India and carrying them by camel northward from Ma'rib through Makkah to Syria and Egypt, thus avoiding the hazards of the Red Sea. If, however, transportation by sea seemed preferable the route ran either all the way up the Red Sea to the canal connecting with one of the eastern arms of the Nile or else through the southern part of the Red Sea to Wadi al-Hammamat and then across the Egyptian desert to Thebes or down the Nile to Memphis. The land route through al-Hijaz was dotted with Himyarite stations.<sup>1</sup> Strabo<sup>2</sup> writes

that the caravan journey from “Minaea to Aelana” (al-'Aqabah) takes

<sup>1</sup> Sec Koran 34 117-18.

» Bk. XVT. ch. § 4.

CH. V SABAEAN AND OTHER STATES OF SOUTH ARABIA 59  
seventy days. As the people of the West developed more and more the taste for Oriental cloths, perfumes and spices, the South Arabians raised the price of their own products, especially frankincense and myrrh, and increased the tolls on the foreign goods which passed through their hands. In the meantime they more jealously guarded their control over the routes. Hence their proverbial wealth. Petra and then Palmyra became partners in this commercial system, links in the chain, and consequently shared in the ensuing prosperity. But now the whole situation was beginning to change.

When Egypt under the Ptolemies became once more a world power the first attempt was made to contest the supremacy of the sea with the South Arabians. Ptolemy II (285—246 B.C.) reopened the Nile—Red Sea canal originally dug by Sesostris some seventeen centuries previously. The consequent entry of the Ptolemaic merchant marine into the waters separating Egypt from Arabia proved the beginning of the end for the Himyarite commercial activity. Rome, which captured Egypt from the Ptolemies about the middle of the first century B.C., followed the Ptolemies in the policy of maritime competition against the Arabians and in the desire to free Egypt from commercial dependence upon al-Yaman. In the days of Pliny Roman citizens were already complaining of the high prices exacted by the South Arabian traders for commodities for which Rome had to pay in cash because she had so little to offer by way of goods they desired.<sup>1</sup> The Abyssinians, evidently not content with

the share of spoils allotted them by their neighbours to the east, were now courting Roman alliance.

In the early Roman period a Greek or Roman, perhaps in the Abyssinian maritime service, was initiated into the mysteries of the sea routes with their hazards and periodic changes of monsoons, and triumphantly returned to Alexandria with a cargo of the greatly desired and highly priced articles, including cinnamon and pepper produced in India, commodities which the Westerners had believed to be of Arabian origin. This Hippalus, the Columbus of early Roman trade, was followed by others who thus contributed to the final break-up of the Arabian monopoly. But full advantage of the memorable discovery of the periodicity of the monsoons and the direct sea route to India was not taken

Pliny. Bk. XII. ch. 41

## 5- The second Himyarite kingdom

### Christianity and Judaism in al-Yaman

til) sometime later. The entry of the Roman shipping into the Indian Ocean sounded the knell of South Arabian prosperity.<sup>1</sup> Economic decline brought in its wake, as it always does, political ruin. One by one Petra, Palmyra and north-western Mesopotamia fell under the paws of the Roman wolf.

About A.D. 300 the monarchical title in South Arabia becomes “king of Saba’, dhu-Raydan, Hadramawt and Yamanat”. This means that by this time Hadramawt had lost its independence. To this title a further addition was soon made: “and of their Arabians in the mountains and in the Tihamah”. Yamanat (Yamanah) might have then embraced

the entire southern coastlands; Tihamah was the Red Sea coast west of San\*a'.

After an invasion from Abyssinia resulting in a short Abyssinian rule (ca. 340-78) the native Himyarite kings resumed their long title and held their position till about A.D. 525. In the Aksumite inscriptions of the middle of the fourth century the Abyssinian monarch claims to be "king of Aksum, Himyar, Raydan, Habashah,\*Salh and Tihamah". This was not the first or only time the Abyssinians invaded Arabia. Once before, in the second and third centuries after Christ, they must have succeeded in establishing temporary authority over parts of South Arabia.

Nine of the Himyarite kings of this period are known to us from inscriptions. Tubba\* is the royal title that has survived in Islamic literature. Among the Himyarite kings best known to later Arabic legends was one Shammar Yar'ash, who is represented as having conquered as far as Samargand, which, according to these legends, takes its name from him. Another was abu-Karib As'ad Kamil, the Abi-kariba As'ad (ca. A.D. 385-420) who is reported to have conquered Persia and who later embraced the Jewish faith. The memory of the latter is still kept alive in the Arabic ballads of adventure. This later Himyarite period was signalized by the introduction of Christianity and Judaism into al-Yaman. '

The religion of South Arabia was in its essence a planetary astral system in which the cult of the moon-god prevailed. The moon, known in Hadramawt as Sin, to the Minaeans as Wadd (love or lover, father), to the Sabaeans as Almaqah (the healthgiving god?) and to the Qatabanians as 'Amm (paternal uncle),

<sup>1</sup> Cf. George F. Hourani in *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, vol. xi (1952), pp. 291-5.      <sup>a</sup> I.e. Hadramawt. See

Nielsen, Handbuch, vol. i, p. 104. stood at the head of the pantheon. He was conceived of as a masculine deity and took precedence over the sun, Shams, who was his consort. 'Athtar (Venus, corresponding to the Babylonian goddess Ishtar, Phoenician 'Ashtart), their son, was the third member of the triad. From this celestial pair sprang the many other heavenly bodies considered divine. The North Arabian al-Lät, who figured in the Koran, may have been another name for the sun-goddess.

Christianity of the Monophysite type began to trickle in from the north, particularly Syria, at an early date. Syrian missionaries fleeing persecution may have entered al-Yaman at times unknown to us, but the first Christian embassy to South Arabia that we read of was that sent by the Emperor Constantius in 356 under the leadership of Theophilus Indus, an Arian. The real motive behind the mission lay in the international politics of the day and the rivalry between the Roman and Persian empires for spheres of influence in South Arabia. Theophilus succeeded in building one church at 'Adan (Aden) and two others in the country of the Himyarites. Najrân, into which Christianity of the Monophysite communion is said to have been introduced by a holy man from Syria named Faymiyün (Phemion), embraced the new faith about A.D. 500. Ibn-Hishäm<sup>1</sup> and al-Tabari<sup>2</sup> give us the legend of this ascetic, who was captured by an Arab caravan and brought to Najrân. Ya'qûb of Sarûj (f 521) addressed a comforting letter in Syriac to the Christians of Najrân. The second caliph, 'Umar, deported (A.D. 635-6) to al-'Irâq those of them who had failed to embrace Islam.<sup>3</sup> As late as A.D. 840 we hear of a Mâr Petrus, bishop of San'ä\* and al-Yaman.

Judaism also became widely spread in al-Yaman under the second Himyarite kingdom. It must have found its way early into North Arabia, perhaps consequent to the conquest

of Palestine and the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in A.D. 70. Judging by the names preserved most of the Jews in Arabia must have been Judaized Aramaeans and Arabians rather than descendants of Abraham. In the early part of the sixth century the Hebrew religion had such a hold upon al-Yaman that the last Himyarite king, dhu-Nuwäs (a descendant of the Tubba' As'ad Kämil),

' Sirah, ed. Wüstenfeld (Göttingen, 1858), pp. 20-22.

<sup>1</sup> Ta'rikh al-Rusul, ed. de Goeje. vol. i (Leyden, 1881-2), pp. 919-25.

\* Balädhuri. Fuiüh, p. 66 = Hitti, Origins, pp. 101-2. See below, p. 169.

was a Jew. Virtually all the hundred thousand Jews in al-Yaman have been, after 1948, transferred to Israel.

Rivalry between the South Arabian converts of the two newly introduced monotheistic religions led to active hostility. Evidently dhu-Nuwas, representing the nationalistic spirit, associated the native Christians with the hated rule of the Christian Abyssinians. To this Jewish monarch is ascribed the famous massacre of the Christians of Najran in October 523 (sur. 85 : 4).<sup>1</sup> Daws dhu-Tha'laban (or Thu'luban) survived, according to Arabic tradition, and implored the Emperor Justin I for aid, the Byzantine emperor at that time being regarded as the protector of Christians everywhere. The emperor wrote to the Negus (Najashi) of Abyssinia (Kaleb Ela Asbeha in the inscriptions), for he represented the Christian power nearest the scene of trouble. The Negus is said to have sent 70,000 men across the Red Sea to Arabia under a certain Aryat. This campaign therefore falls within the network of the international politics of that age: Byzantium was seeking through Abyssinia to

bring the Arabian tribes under her influence and use them against Persia.<sup>2</sup> The Abyssinians were victorious in 523 and again in 525. The leader on the latter occasion was Abrahah (variant of Abraham), originally an officer under ArySt, but who by this time had fallen out with his commander and taken over the supreme command. According to al-Tabari,<sup>3</sup> dhu-Nuwas, setting spurs to his steed, "plunged it into the waves of the sea and was never seen again". Thus came to his end the last Himyarite monarch, and with him the period of the independence of al-Yaman was terminated. All that remains of the glorious memory of the ancient Himyarite dynasty is today perpetuated in the name of an obscure tribe, Himyar, east of 'Adan.

The      The Abyssinians came as helpers, but as often happens

Abyiinfa remained as conquerors. They turned colonists<sup>4</sup> and remained in rule from 525 to 575 in control of the land whence their ancestors had long before emigrated to the African \*Shore. Abrahah, the acknowledged Aksumite viceroy, built in San'a', now the capital, one of the most magnificent cathedrals of the age, called by the Arabian writers al-Qalis (al-Qulays, al-Qullays, from Gr.

<sup>1</sup> See Axel Moberg, *The Book of the Himyarites* (Lund, 1924).

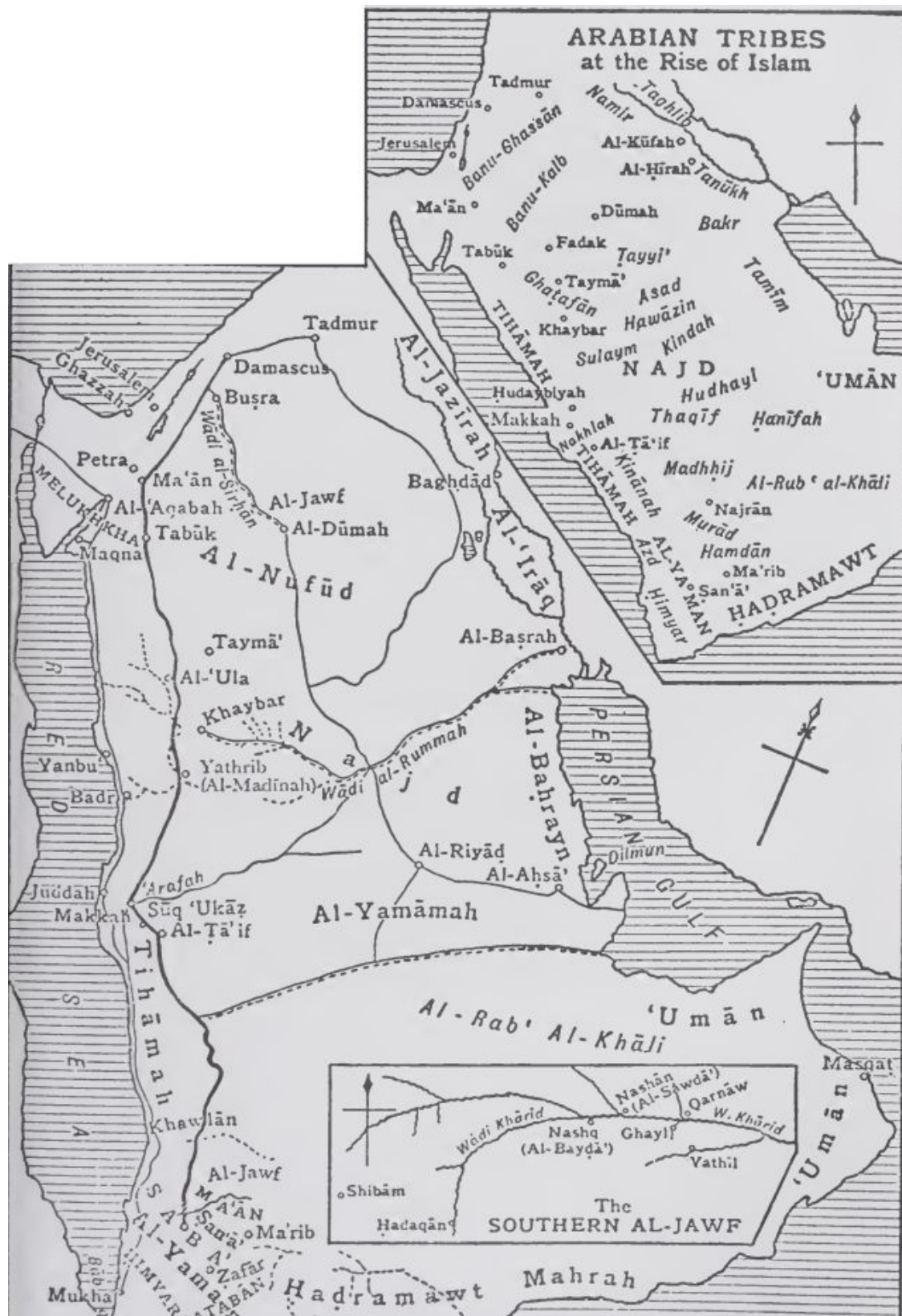
<sup>1</sup> Procopius, *History of the H'ars*, ed. and tr. H. B. Dewing (London, 1904), Bk. I, ch. 20, §§ 9-12.

' Vol. i, pp. 927-8.

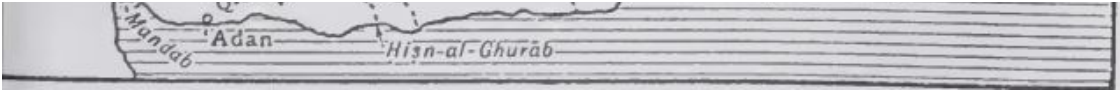
Procopius, Bk. I, ch. 20, §§ 2, 6.

Route Highway

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ANCIENT ARABIA Peoples, Places and Routes (Including; the chief later Moslem towns)

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ekklesia, church). The cathedral, of which little is left today but the site, was built from the ruins of ancient Ma'rib.

The Christian Abyssinians were evidently intent upon converting the land 'and creating a rival to pagan Makkah, the centre of pilgrimage in the north, for pilgrimage was a source of great income to those who dwelt in the city to which the pilgrims travelled or beside the roads leading thither. In the establishment of a southern religious shrine that would draw large crowds, to the detriment of the Hijaz sanctuary, the Abyssinian overlords were evidently successful. Indeed the memory of this economic-religious rivalry has been perpetuated in the local tradition in which two Arabian pagans of the Fuqaym tribe, attached to the cult of the Ka'bah, polluted the San'a' cathedral on the eve of a festival, causing Abrahah to undertake a disciplinary expedition against Makkah. The incident is said to have taken place in the year of the birth of the Prophet (570 or 571), which year has been dubbed 'am al-fil, the year of the elephant, after the elephant which accompanied Abrahah on his northward march and which greatly impressed the Arabians of al-Hijaz, where elephants had never been

seen. The Abyssinian army was destroyed by smallpox, "the small pebbles" (sijjU) of the Koran.<sup>1</sup>

### The breaking of Ma'rib dam

To this period should also be assigned the memorable event immortalized in Islamic literature as "the bursting of the great dam" of Ma'rib occasioned by the great flood.<sup>2</sup> Al-Isfahani,<sup>3</sup> who devotes the eighth book of his annals (finished A.D. 961) to Himyarite kings, puts the tragic event four hundred years before Islam, but Yaqut<sup>4</sup> comes nearer to the truth when he assigns it to the reign of the Abyssinians. The ruins of this dam are visible to the present day. A dated South Arabic inscription (date corresponding to A.D. 542-3) by Abrahah dealing with one of the breaks has been discovered and published by Glaser.<sup>5</sup>

This breach in the time of Abrahah was preceded by one in A.D. 450 when the water broke the dam. But the works were then restored. The final catastrophe alluded to in the Koran (34: 15) must have taken place after 542 and before 570. Connected with one of the early breaches in the dyke was the <sup>1</sup> 105 : 1-3. See al-Tabari, Tafsir al-Quran (Bulaq, 1329), vol. xxx, p. 193; ibn-Hisham, Si rah, p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> Koran 34 : 15.  
iv, p. 383.

<sup>3</sup> Op. cit. p. 126.

<sup>4</sup> Buldan, vol.

<sup>5</sup> In Mitteilungen der vorderasiatischen Gesellschaft (Berlin, 1897), pp. 360-488.

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migration of the banu-Ghassan to the Hawran region in Syria, where they became the bulwark of Roman rule, and of the banu-Lakhm to the Hira region, where a number of South Arabic inscriptions have recently been unearthed. The

banu-Ghassan chose the year of the breaking of the dam as the starting-point for an era of their own.<sup>1</sup> Besides the Ghassan and Tanukh of Syria and al-Traq, the banu-Tayyi', Kindah and other large and powerful tribes of North and Central Arabia claim South Arabian origin. There are today families in Syria which trace their entry into the country back to this same event.

Later Arab imagination seized upon this spectacular episode of the great flood and bursting of the dam to explain the whole age-long process of decline and decay in South Arabian trade, agriculture,<sup>2</sup> prosperity and national life; a decline due, as we have already learned, to the entry of Roman shipping into the Red Sea, the introduction of the divisive influence of new religions and the subsequent submission to foreign rule. The legend of "the bursting of the dam"—for so it became in later annals— is perhaps to be analysed as a concentrated and dramatic re-telling of a long history of economic and sociological causes that led to the disintegration and final downfall of South Arabian society and as the crystallization of the results of a long period of decay into one single event. And, with what appears to be a subtle appreciation of the intangible quality of the true causes leading up to this tragedy, the chroniclers<sup>3</sup> report that a rat turned over a stone which fifty men could not have budged, and thus brought about the collapse of the entire dam. Muzayqiya' ('Amr ibn-'Amir Ma'-al-Sama') was according to tradition the ruler during whose reign this rat did its momentous and epoch-making work.

The national movement to free al-Yaman from Abyssinian Then rule found its hero, so the tradition goes, in a scion of the old Himyar royal line, Sayf ibn-dhi-Yazan. The successful struggle (strati) of Sayf in his romance found a place in the Arabic saga and, revised and embellished in Egypt in the

course of the fourteenth century, is still recited by Arab story-tellers in the cafes of

<sup>1</sup> Al-Mas'udi, *Kitab al-Tanbih*, ed. de Goeje (Leyden, 1893), P-202.

<sup>1</sup> For the theory of climatic desiccation there is no sufficient evidence in historic times; Alois Musil, *Northern Nigritia* (New York, 1928), pp. 304-19.

<sup>3</sup> Mas'udi. *Muruj*, vol. iii, p. 383; Yaqut, *Bihar*, vol. iv, p. 384; cf. Mas'udi, PP- 370-/I.

Cairo, Beirut and Baghdad. Sayf, according to tradition, sought, but naturally failed to receive, Constantinople's aid against Abyssinia, for the latter power was Christian and therefore friendly to Byzantium. He was then presented by the Arab king of al-Hirah to the Persian sovereign, Kisra Anusharwan, at the Sasanid court in al-Mada'in (Seleucia-Ctesiphon). The destinies of the world were then chiefly in the hands of the Christian Byzantines and Mazdean Persians, Aksum acting as the unofficial agent of Byzantium. The Christian Arabians were pro-Byzantine and looked to Constantinople for protection and countenance; the Jewish and pagan Arabians were pro-Persian and expected aid from Ctesiphon. In response to Sayf's prayers the Persian emperor in 575 sent eight hundred men under Wahraz (or Wahriz), who routed the Abyssinian garrison in al-Yaman and freed the country from the hated African rule. At first a system of joint administration was instituted with Sayf as titular head. Sayf took up his residence in the ancient castle of Ghumdan, which was evidently in ruins during the Abyssinian rule. But soon al-Yaman was converted into a Persian satrapy and the South Arabians found they had only changed one master for another.

In this tradition we have preserved for us a clear recollection of the rivalry between the two powers on either side of Arabia —Zoroastrian Persia and Christian Abyssinia (backed by Byzantium)—to inherit their neighbour, the defunct South Arabian kingdom. The native Christian Arabian sympathy with Byzantium served as a wedge for Abyssinian intervention, while Jewish and pagan leanings toward Persia gave the latter its opportunity. With the Syro-Arabian desert in the north barring the penetration of world powers South Arabia thus acted as the gateway through which these powers found their way into the peninsula.

In 628, the sixth year after the Hijrah, Badhan, the fifth Persian satrap of al-Yaman, embraced Islam. With the birth of this new religion the centre of interest in the peninsula shifted to the north. Henceforth the stream of Arabian history flowed in northern channels, with al-Hijaz replacing al-Yaman in public consideration.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE NABATAEAN AND OTHER PETTY KINGDOMS OF NORTH AND CENTRAL ARABIA

Aside from the South Arabian kingdoms a few petty states evolved during the pre-Islamic period in the northern and central parts of the peninsula. These North Arabian states, like those of the south, drew their strength mainly from commerce and were in no sense militaristic either in their inception or in their development. The earliest among them was the Nabataean kingdom.

#### 1. The

#### Nabataeans

We read of no Assyrian campaign directed against the Nabataeans, because they were not then on the main route to the west. In the early part of the sixth century B.C. the Nabataeans (al-Anbat, classical Nabataei)<sup>7</sup> came as nomadic tribes from what is today called Transjordan and occupied the land of the Edomites (Idumaeans, the descendants of Esau), from whom they later wrested Petra. The predecessors of the Edomites in this "land of Seir" were the Horites (Hurris).<sup>8</sup> The Nabataeans, from their metropolis Petra, came into possession of the neighbouring territory. Petra, a Greek word meaning rock, is a translation of the Hebrew Sela\* mentioned in Isaiah 16 : 1, 42 : 1 and 2 Kings 14 : 7. Al-Raqim<sup>9</sup> is the Arabic correspondent and the modern name is Wadi Musa (the valley of Moses). The ancient city, located on an arid plateau three thousand feet high, presents today the spectacle of a vast glowing necropolis hewn in a rock (Umm al-Biyarah) whose sandstone strata exhibit almost all the colours of the rainbow.

For upwards of four hundred years, beginning toward the end of the fourth century B.C., Petra was a key city on the caravan route between Saba' and the Mediterranean.

Our first detailed account of the early history of the Nabataeans comes from Diodorus Siculus (fl. after 57 B.C.). About 312 B.C. they were strong enough to resist two expeditions sent against them by Antigonos, Alexander's successor as king of Syria, and return victoriously to "the rock".<sup>1</sup> They were then within the Ptolemaic sphere of influence. Later they became the allies of Rome and nominally co-operated in the famous invasion of Arabia in 24 B.C. by Gallus. In the reign of Harithath (al-Harith, Aretas III, ca. 87-62 B.C.) the Nabataeans first came into close contact with the Romans. It was then that the royal coins were first struck. Julius Caesar in 47 B.C. called on Maliku (Malik, Malchus I) to provide him with cavalry for the

Alexandrian war. His successor, 'Obidath ('Ubaydah, Obodas III, ca. 289 B.C.), was the ruler under whom the Roman expedition to Arabia took place. Arabia Petraea, whose capital was Petra, reached its height under Harithath IV (9 B.C. to A.D. 40). At the time of Christ the Nabataean kingdom extended north as far as Damascus, which together with Coele-Syria was wrested from Seleucid hands by Harithath III (ca. 87 B.C.). It was an ethnarch of Harithath IV who endeavoured to arrest Paul in Damascus.<sup>2</sup> Al-Hijr (Mada'in Salih) in northern al-Hijaz must have also in the first century of our era been included in the Nabataean kingdom, as the inscriptions there attest. The names of all the Nabataean monarchs from Harithath I (169 B.C.) to the last independent ruler, Rabbil II (A.D. 70-106), are known to us.<sup>8</sup> In A.D. 105 the Emperor Trajan put an end to the Nabataean autonomy and in the following year their territory became a regular Roman province.

After Diodorus, Josephus (f ca. A.D. 95) is our chief source of information about the Nabataeans, but Josephus was interested in them only as they crossed wires with the Hebrews. To him Arabia meant the Nabataean state reaching eastward as far as the Euphrates. Malchus or Malichus (Ar. Malik), mentioned by Josephus<sup>4</sup> as the "king of Arabia" whom Herod and his father had befriended, and the Malchus<sup>5</sup> (Malchus II, A.D. 40-70) who about A.D. 67 sent 1000 horse and 5000 foot to the assistance of Titus in his attack on Jerusalem, were both Nabataeans. In I Mac. 5 : 25 and 2 Mac. 5 : 8 the Nabataeans are identified <sup>1</sup> Diodorus, Bk. XIX, §§ 94-7. <sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. 11 : 32.

<sup>8</sup> See the list in Cooke, North-Semitic Inscriptions, p. 216.

<sup>4</sup> Antiquities, Bk. XIV, ch. 14, § I; The Jewish War, Bk. I, ch. 14, § I.

\* Jezvish War, Bk. III, ch. 4, § 2.







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with the Arabians. The modern Huwaytát Bedouins are regarded as the descendants of the Nabataeans.

Though they spoke Arabic as an everyday language the Nabataeans, in default of an Arabic script at that early date, used the Aramaic characters of their northern neighbours. Diodorus<sup>1</sup> refers to a letter of theirs written to Antigonus “in Syriac characters”. Aramaic was used by them as the language of learning and trade, but the mistakes made in the Aramaic inscriptions which have survived, the Arabic proper names and the use of such Arabic expressions as ghayr (other than) betray the Arabic vernacular of their authors.

This Nabataean cursive script, taken from the Aramaic, developed in the third century of our era into the script of the North Arabic tongue, the Arabic of the Koran and of the present day. More particularly it was transformed into the round naskhi script in distinction to the angular Küfi (Kufic), which owes its name to al-Kufah—though employed before it was founded—and was used almost exclusively for the Koran and early official documents, monuments and coins. One of the oldest Arabic inscriptions is that of al-Namarah in eastern Hawrán, which goes back to A.D. 328 and was set up as an epitaph on the tomb of Imru'-al-Qays, a Lakhmid king of al-Hirah. No Nabataean literature has come down to us other than epigraphic.

The

Sinaitic origin of the alphabet

The Sinaitic peninsula, close to the Nabataean homeland and the scene of the promulgation of the Ten Commandments, has within the last years yielded probably the oldest alphabetic inscriptions ever found. These inscriptions were discovered at Sarabit al-Khadim and removed to the Cairo Museum. Many attempts have been made at their decipherment. The writing was done presumably by Sinaitic workers in the turquoise mines and dates from about 1850 B.C.—some eight centuries before the Ahiiram inscription of Jubayl (ancient Gebal, Gr. Byblos) found by Montet and considered one of the earliest Phoenician inscriptions.

After the development of the Sinaitic alphabet its characters were carried into northern Syria, and there turned into actual cuneiform, as the Ras al-Shamrah tablets of the late fifteenth century indicate.<sup>2</sup> This newly discovered script is clearly alpha-<sup>1</sup> Bk. XIX, ch. 96.

<sup>1</sup> F.-A. Schaeffer in *Syria*, vol. x (1929), pp. 285-97; Charles Virolleaud, *ibid*, pp. 304-10.

CH. vi THE NABATAEAN AND OTHER PETTY KINGDOMS 71  
betic and Semitic, and although written with a stylus on clay tablets its letters were not borrowed from the earlier Sumerian-Akkadian characters. In it the Sinaitic alphabet was conventionalized into wedge-shaped signs.

For a long time it has been recognized by modern scholars that the Phoenicians, who were the first to use an exclusively alphabetic system of writing, must have originally received the basis for their system from Egyptian hieroglyphic sources, but the gap always seemed wide between the two systems. The Sinaitic writing now comes in to bridge that gap. The Sinaitic Semite took, for instance, from the hieroglyphics the sign for ox-head (not caring what

“ox-head” was in the Egyptian language) and called this sign by the name of the ox-head in his own language, aleph. Then according to the principle of acrophony he used this sign for the sound a. The same treatment he accorded to the sign for “house”, calling it beth and using it for the sound b and so on.

This Sinaitic origin of the alphabet explains how it could have been transmitted on the one hand to South Arabia, where it underwent an independent development and was employed by the Minaeans perhaps as early as 1200 B.C., and how on the other hand it was carried northward to the Phoenician coast. With the trade in turquoise, which the Arabs sold to the Phoenicians, went the alphabet, just as it later went with the trade from the Phoenicians to the Greeks to become the mother of all European alphabets.

The inscriptions, discovered in the volcanic Safa region of Hawrân, which date from about A.D. 100 or later,<sup>1</sup> as well as the Dedanite and Lihyanite inscriptions of al-‘Ulâ in northern al-Hijâz (the so-called proto-Arabic) of the seventh to the third century B.C., and the Thamûdic writings of the same region, particularly of al-Hijr and Taymâ’ (of the fifth century B.C. to the fourth Christian century), represent in their epigraphy by-forms of the South Arabic alphabet;<sup>2</sup> but the language of all these inscriptions is North Arabic differing but little from the well-known classical Arabic. The Thamûdic graffiti are a development of the Lihyanite script, another development of which is seen in the Safa graffiti. The Safa inscriptions are the northernmost South

<sup>1</sup> Cf. F. V. Winnett, *A Study of the Lihyanite and Thamûdic Inscriptions* (Toronto, 1937), p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> René Dussaud, *Les Arabes en Syrie avant l'Islam* (Paris, 1907), pp. 57-73; Dussaud and F. Macler, *Voyage*

archéologique au \$afa et dans le Djebel ed-Driiz (Paris, 1901), pp. 3-14.

Arabian writings found. The South Arabic script has also survived in Ethiopie.

The historical relations of the three northern peoples who used these similar scripts, Safaitic, Lihyânite and Thamüdic, have not been completely determined. The Lihyânites, whom Pliny<sup>1</sup> mentions under the name Lechieni, were an ancient people, probably a section of the Thamüd, and their capital Daydân was once a Minaean colony on the great trade route which carried the merchandise of al-Yaman and India to the Mediterranean ports. After the fall of Petra (A.D. 105) the Lihyânites seem also to have held the important Nabataean centre al-Hijr (modern Madâ'in Sâlih), once a Thamüdic town. The Minaean as well as the Nabataean civilization greatly influenced the later Lihyânite culture. The ruins of al-'Ula, which include tombs decorated with sculptures in high relief, indicate an advanced pre-Islamic civilization of which very little is known.<sup>2</sup>

## Petra

Petra reached its greatest wealth and prosperity in the first century of our era under the patronage of the Romans, who treated it as a buffer state against Parthia. On three sides, east, west and south, the city was impregnable. Carved out of the solid rock, it was surrounded on all sides by precipitous and almost impassable cliffs and was entered through a narrow winding defile. The city provided the only spot between the Jordan and Central Arabia where water was not only abundant but invitingly pure. Here the South Arabians obtained on their northward caravan march fresh relays of camels and drivers. Thus the Nabataeans formed an important link in the commercial chain by which South

Arabia flourished. The spectacular ruins of Petra still attract many tourists and constitute an important source of income to the modern state of Transjordan.

Petra had a kind of Ka'bah with Dūshara (Dusares), worshipped under the form of a black rectangular stone, at the head of the pantheon; Allât, identified by Herodotus<sup>3</sup> with Aphrodite Urania, was the chief female deity. Dūshara (dhu-Shara, i.e. the lord of Shara) was later associated with the vine, introduced to the land of Nabataeans in the Hellenistic period, and

<sup>1</sup> Bk. VI, ch. 32. ...

<sup>2</sup> Consult Eduard Glaser, *Skizze der Geschichte und Géographie Arabiens* (Berlin, 1890), vol. ii, pp. 98-127; Jaussen and Savignac, *Mission archéologique en Arabie* (Paris, 1909), pp. 250-91.

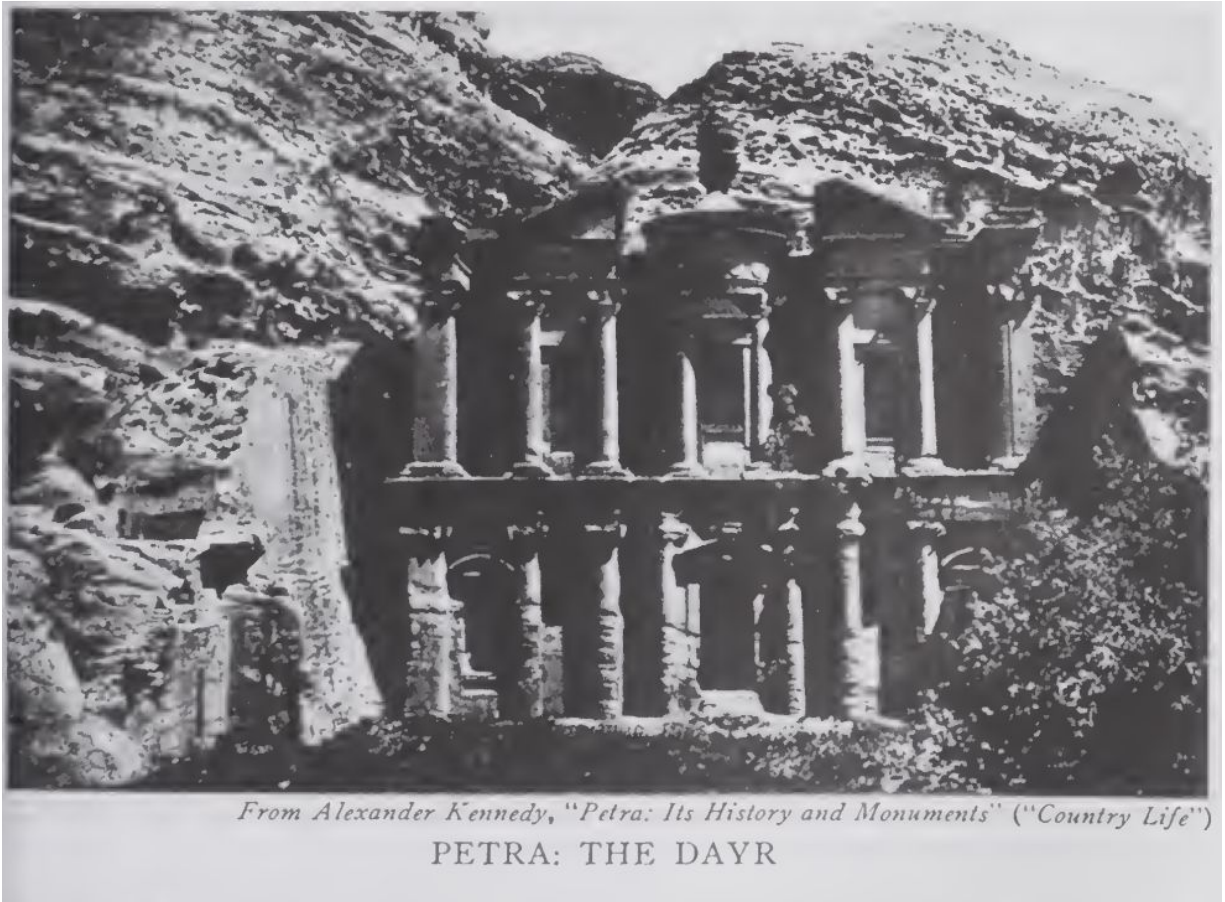
» Bk. III, ch. 8.

CH. vi THE NABATAEAN AND OTHER PETTY KINGDOMS 73 as the god of wine borrowed some of the traits of Dionysus-Bacchus.



From Alexander Kennedy, "Petra: Its History and Monuments" ("Country Life")

PETRA: THE PALACE



*From Alexander Kennedy, "Petra: Its History and Monuments" ("Country Life")*

#### PETRA: THE DAYR

From Alexander Kennedy, "Petra: Its History and Monuments" ("Country Life")

#### PETRA: THE DAYR

In the first two centuries after Christ, as the sea route to India became more and more familiar to the Roman sailors, as the

caravan route from east to west was gradually diverted to a more northerly region centring at Palmyra, and as the north-to-south trade took a course farther east corresponding to the later pilgrimage route and the present Hijaz Railway, Petra lost its advantageous position and the Nabataean state began to decline. After the reduction of the city in A.D. 105 through the cupidity and short-sightedness of Trajan,

Arabia Petraea was incorporated (106) into the Roman empire under the name Provincia Arabia, and henceforth the history of Petra remained almost a blank for many centuries.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Pal-myrena

The new conditions created in Western Asia by the Parthian conquest of Mesopotamia and the new routes which began to be used on a large scale after the first century of our era gave prominence to a city situated in an oasis in the middle of the Syrian desert and whose fame has since become world wide. This is the city of Palmyra (Ar. Tadmur), whose present ruins are among the most magnificent and least-studied remains of antiquity. Located between the two rival empires of Parthia and Rome, Palmyra depended for its security upon the maintenance of a balance between the two and in profiting by its neutrality.<sup>2</sup> Its geographic position, with its plentiful supply of fresh and mineral waters, afforded a rendezvous not only for the eastern and western trade but for the south-to-north commerce starting in South Arabia. The “chief of the caravan” and the “chief of the market” figure in inscriptions as leading citizens.<sup>3</sup> In the course of the second and third centuries of our era this desert metropolis became one of the richest cities of the Near East.

Tadmor (the early Semitic name of Palmyra) must have been a very ancient settlement, for it was cited under the name Tad-mar of Amurru<sup>4</sup> in an inscription of Tiglath-Pileser I (ca. 1100 B.C.). So impressed by its ruins were the Arab story-tellers that they ascribed its origin to the jinn who, they believed, had built it for King Solomon.

Exactly when the Arabs came into possession of Palmyra local tradition does not seem to remember. The first



authentic mention of the town is when Mark Antony in 42—41 B.C. made a vain

<sup>1</sup> A recently identified Nabataean site, 'RM, twenty-five miles east of al-'Aqabah, is koranic Iram (sur. 89 : 6).

<sup>2</sup> Pliny, Bk. V, ch. 21.  
279.

<sup>3</sup> Cooke, pp. 274,

<sup>4</sup> Luckenbill, vol. i, §§ 287, 308. The Hebrew chronicler (2 Ch. 8 : 4) and the Greek translator of 1 K. 9: 18 confused it with Tamar in Idumaea built by Solomon. Cf. Ezek. 47 : 19, 48 : 28.

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attempt to possess himself of its riches. Its earliest native inscription goes back to 9 B.C., at which time Palmyra was already an important trade centre between the Roman and Parthian states.

The city must have come within the Roman political orbit early in the imperial period, for we find decrees relative to its customs duties issued in A.D. 17. In the time of Hadrian (A.D. 117-38) Palmyra and its dependent cities became vassals of Rome. As a consequence of Hadrian's visit in 130, the city received the name Hadriana Palmyra. Septimius Severus (A.D. 193-211) transformed Palmyra and its towns into provincial cities of the empire. At the beginning of the third century Palmyra assumed the status of a colony, but even then it must have enjoyed administrative independence with only a nominal recognition of Roman suzerainty. Palmyrenes then began to add to their names Roman ones. The Romans recognized the city's military importance, for their road from Damascus to the Euphrates passed through it.

Palmyra reached its period of splendour between A.D. 130 and 270. To this period most of its inscribed monuments belong. Its international trade extended as far east as China, and as a city created by the caravan trade it became the true heir of Petra.

The Palmyrenes did not distinguish themselves as warriors until their chieftain Odaynath (Odenathus, Ar. Udhaynah) drove out of Syria Shapur I, who in A.D. 260 had captured the Emperor Valerian and conquered a large portion of Syria. Odaynath pursued Shapur to the very walls of his capital, Ctesiphon (al-Mada'in). In the protracted struggle between the Romans and the Sasanids, who succeeded (226) the Parthians, the Palmyrene chief sided with the former and was appointed in 262 dux Orientis, vice-emperor over the Orient. The Emperor Gallienus bestowed on him the honorific title of Imperator and acknowledged him master of the Roman legions in the East. This meant that over Asia Minor and Egypt the supreme authority was nominally in his hand; over Syria, North Arabia and possibly Armenia it was virtually so. Thus did Palmyra become mistress of Western Asia. Four years later (266-7) Odaynath and his eldest son were treacherously assassinated at Hirs (Emesa), possibly at the instigation of Rome, which had suspected him of disloyalty.

Odaynath's beautiful and ambitious wife Zenobia (Aramaic

Bath-Zabbay, Ar. al-Zabba\*, also Zaynab) proved a worthy successor. Ruling on behalf of her young son Wahb-Allath (the gift of al-Lat, Greek Athenodorus) she arrogated to herself the title of Queen of the East and for a time defied the Roman empire. With masculine energy she pushed forward the frontiers of her kingdom so as to include Egypt and a large part of Asia Minor, where the Roman garrisons in 270 were thrust back as far as Ankara (Ancyra). Even in

Chalcedon opposite Byzantium a military attempt was made to establish her rule. Her victorious troops in the same year occupied Alexandria, the second city of the empire, and her minor son, who was then proclaimed King of Egypt, issued coins from which the head of Aurelian was omitted. Her success on the battlefield was due in the main to her two Palmyrene generals, Zabbay and Zabda.

Aurelian at last bestirred himself. In a battle at Antioch followed by another near Hirs he defeated Zabda, and in the spring of 272 he entered Palmyra. The proud Arab queen fled in despair on a swift dromedary into the desert, but was finally taken captive and led in golden chains before the chariot of the victor to grace his triumphal entry into Rome. En route to his capital Aurelian was informed of an uprising in Palmyra and thereupon speedily returned to the city, completely destroyed its walls and dissolved its commonwealth. The ornaments of the glorious Temple of the Sun (Bel) he transferred to the new temple he erected in Rome to the sun-god of the East in memory of his notable victory. The city was left in ruins, in practically the same state as at present. Thus did the brilliant and meteoric glory of Palmyra come to an end.

The Palmyrene civilization was an interesting blend of Greek, Syrian and Parthian (Iranian) elements. It is significant not only in itself but, as in the case of the Nabataean civilization which we have already studied, as an illustration of the cultural heights which the Arabians of the desert are capable of attaining when the proper opportunities present themselves. That the Palmyrenes were of Arabian stock is evidenced from the proper names and the frequent occurrence of Arabic words in their Aramaic inscriptions. The language they spoke was a dialect of Western Aramaic not unlike the Nabataean and Egyptian Aramaic. Their religion had the prominent solar

features that characterized the religion of North Arabians.  
Bel, of Babylonian

### 3 The

#### Ghassanids

##### The Syro-Arab kingdom at its height

origin, stood at the head of the pantheon; Baal Shamin (the lord of the heavens) figured in votive inscriptions and no less than twenty other names of deities occur in Palmyrene.

With the fall of the ephemeral kingdom of Palmyrena land traffic sought and found other paths. Busra (Bostra) in Hawran and other Ghassanid towns became beneficiaries of the desert city as that city had itself once been the beneficiary of Petra.

The Ghassanids claim descent from an ancient South Arabian tribe, headed formerly by 'Amr Muzayqiya' ibn-\*Amir Ma'-al-Sama', which is supposed to have fled to Hawran<sup>10</sup> and al-Balqa' from al-Yaman towards the end of the third Christian century at the destruction of the Ma'rib dam. Jafnah, a son of 'Amr, is regarded as the founder of the dynasty, for which abu-al-Fida'<sup>11</sup> claims thirty-one sovereigns, Hamzah al-Isfahani<sup>12</sup> thirty-two, and al-Mas'udi<sup>13</sup> and ibn-Qutaybah<sup>14</sup> only eleven. These figures show how obscure Jafnid history has remained to Arab chroniclers.

This Yamani tribe displaced the Salih, the first Arabians to found a kingdom in Syria, and established itself in the region south-east of Damascus at the northern end of the great transport route that bound Ma'rib with Damascus. In

course of time the banu-Ghassan were Christianized and Syrianized, adopting the Aramaic language of Syria without, however, abandoning their native Arabic tongue. Like other Arabian tribes in the Fertile Crescent they thus became bilingual. About the end of the fifth century they were brought within the sphere of Byzantine political influence and used as a buffer state to stay the overflow of Bedouin hordes, serving a purpose not unlike that of Transjordan under the British today. Facing the Byzantine empire as they did, the Ghassanids adopted a form of Christianity which, though of the local Monophysite variety, still coincided with their political interests. Their capital was at first a movable camp; later it may have become fixed at al-Jabiyah in the Jawlan (Gaulanitis) and for some time was located at Jilliq.<sup>6</sup>

The Ghassanid kingdom, like its rival and\* relative at al-

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Hirah, the kingdom of the Lakhmids, attained its greatest importance during the sixth century after Christ. In this century al-Harith II ibn-Jabalah of Ghassan (ca. 529-69) and al-Mun-dhir III ibn-Ma'-al-Sama' of al-Hirah (Alamundarus of Byzantine histories, f 554) dominate Arab history. This al-Harith (nicknamed al-A'raj, the lame, by Arab chroniclers) is the first authentic name and by far the greatest in Jafnid annals. His history can be checked with the Greek sources.<sup>1</sup> As a reward for defeating his formidable Lakhmid rival, al-Mundhir III, the Byzantine Emperor Justinian appointed him (529) lord over all the Arab tribes of Syria and created him patricius and phylarch —the highest rank next to that of the emperor himself. In Arabic the title was rendered simply malik, king.

The greater part of al-Harith's long reign was occupied with wars in the service of the Byzantine interests. About 544, in a battle with al-Mundhir III, the latter captured a son of al-Harith and offered him as a sacrifice to al-'Uzza, the counterpart of the Greek Aphrodite.<sup>2</sup> But ten years later al-Harith took his revenge and slew his Lakhmid enemy in a battle in the district of Qinnasrin. This battle is perhaps the "Day of Halimah" of Arabic tradition, Halimah being the daughter of al-Harith who, before the battle, perfumed with her own hands the hundred Ghassanid champions ready for death and clad them in shrouds of white linen in addition to coats of mail.<sup>3</sup>

In 563 al-Harith paid a visit to the court of Justinian I at Constantinople.<sup>4</sup> The appearance of this Bedouin phylarch left a deep impression on the emperor's entourage. During al-Harith's stay in Constantinople he secured the appointment of the Mono-physite bishop Jacob Baradaeus (Ya'qub al-Barda'i) of Edessa as prelate of the Syrian Arabs. So zealous was this Jacob in the propagation of the faith that the Syrian Monophysite church became known after him as Jacobite.

Al-Harith's successor was his son al-Mundhir, also Alamun-Al-darus in Byzantine chronicles. Like his father, al-Mundhir proved <sup>^hir</sup> an ardent protector of Monophysitism,<sup>5</sup> and this temporarily al-

<sup>1</sup> Procopius, Bk. I, ch. 17, §§47-8; Joannes Malalas, *Chronographia*, ed. L. Dindorf (Bonn, 1831), pp. 435, 461 seq. , <sup>2</sup> Procopius, Bk. II, ch. 28, § 13.

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-Qutaybah, pp. 314-15; cf. abu-al-Fida', vol. i, p. 84.

<sup>4</sup> Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. C. de Boor (Leipzig, 1883), p. 240.

<sup>6</sup> John of Ephesus, *Ecclesiastical History*, ed. William Cureton (Oxford, 1853),

pp. 251-2; tr. R. Payne Smith (Oxford, 1860), pp. 284-5.

alienated the sympathy of Byzantium and resulted in an open rebellion on the part of the Ghassânids. In 580 he visited Constantinople with his two sons and was received with great honour by Tiberius II, who replaced the precious diadem on his head with a still more precious crown. In the same year he successfully raided and burned al-Hirah,<sup>1</sup> the capital of his Lakhmid foes. But this was not enough to remove the suspicion of treachery to the imperial cause with which his father before him had been charged. At the dedication of a church in Hūwârīn, between Damascus and Palmyra, he was apprehended and taken prisoner to Constantinople, later to be incarcerated in Sicily. Likewise his son and successor, al-Nu'man, who ventured to raid and devastate Byzantine territory, was carried away to Constantinople.

### Fall of the banu-Ghassân

After al-Mundhir and al-Nu'man anarchy seems to have prevailed in Ghassânland. The various tribes in the Syrian-desert chose their own chieftains. The capture of Jerusalem and Damascus (613-14) by the Sâsânid Khusraw Parwiz dealt the last blow to the Jafnid dynasty. Whether Heraclius on his reconquest of Syria in 629 restored the Syro-Arab phylarchate is uncertain. Arab chroniclers make Jabalah ibn-al-Ayham the last king of the house of Ghassan. On the memorable battlefield of Yarmūk (636) this monarch fought on the Byzantine side against the Arabians, but later adopted Islam. As he was circumambulating the Ka'bah in the course of his first pilgrimage, so the story goes, a Bedouin stepped on his cloak and the ex-king slapped him

on the face. The Caliph 'Umar decreed that Jabalah should either submit to a similar blow from the hand of the Bedouin or pay a fine, upon which Jabalah renounced Islam and retired to Constantinople.<sup>2</sup>

The degree of culture attained by the Ghassânids, neighbours of the Byzantines, was undoubtedly higher than that to which their rivals on the Persian borderland, the Lakhmids, ever attained. Under 'their regime and during the earlier Roman period a peculiar civilization seems to have developed along the entire eastern fringe of Syria from a mixture of Arabic, Syrian and Greek elements. Houses of basalt, palaces, triumphal arches, public baths, aqueducts, theatres and churches stood where today there is nothing but utter desolation. The eastern and southern

<sup>1</sup> John of Ephesus, p. 415 (text),= p. 385 (tr.).

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-'Abd-Rabbihi, 'Iqd, vol. i, pp. 140-41.

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slopes of Hawran have preserved the ruins of almost three hundred towns and villages where only a few exist at the present day.

A number of the pre-Islamic poets of Arabia found in the Ghassanid phylarchs munificent patrons. Labld, the youngest of the seven poets who composed the famous "Mu<sup>e</sup>allaqat", fought on the Ghassanid side in the battle of Hallmah. When al-Nabighah al-Dhubyani fell out with the Lakhmid king he found in the court of the sons of al-Harith a haven of refuge. The Madinese poet Hassan ibn-Thabit (b. ca. 563), who claimed kinship with the banu-Ghassan, visited their court in his youth before he became the poet laureate of Muhammad and made a number of references to



it in his diwan (anthology). In an apocryphal passage ascribed to him<sup>1</sup> we have a glowing account of the luxury and magnificence of Jabalah's court with its Makkan and Babylonian and Greek singers and musicians of both sexes and its free use of wine.<sup>2</sup>

From time immemorial streams of Arabian wanderers have 4-  
The been wont to trickle along the eastern coast of their peninsula Lakhmids to the Tigro-Euphrates valley and settle therein. About the beginning of the third century of our era a number of such tribes, calling themselves Tanukh and said to have been of Yamanite origin, found an abode in the fertile region west of the Euphrates. Their advent may have coincided with the disturbances consequent to the fall of the Arsacid Parthian and the establishment of the Sasanid dynasty (A.D. 226).

The Tanukh lived first in tents. Their temporary camp developed in course of time into permanent al-Hirah (from Syriac herta, camp), which lay about three miles south of al-Kufah, not far from ancient Babylon. This al-Hirah became the capital of Persian Arabia.

The native population was Christian belonging to the East Syrian (later Nestorian) Church and was referred to by Arab authors as 'ibad, i.e. worshippers (of Christ).<sup>3</sup> Some of the Tanukh were subsequently Christianized and domiciled in northern Syria. The Tanukhs who later came to southern Lebanon and professed the secret Druze religion trace their origin to the Lakhmid kings of al-Hirah.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Abu-al-Faraj al-Iṣbahani, al-Aghdni (Bulaq, 1284-5), v°b xvb p- \*5-

<sup>1</sup> Among the Christian families living today in southern Lebanon are some which trace their descent to Ghassanid

origin.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Tabari, vol. i, p. 770.

■\* Cf. Hitti, *The Origins of the Druze People and Religion* (New York, 1928, reprint, 1966), p. 21.

Tradition names Malik ibn-Fahm al-Azdi<sup>1</sup> as the first chieftain of this Arab settlement in al-Traq and makes his son Jadhimah al-Abrash a vassal of Ardashlr. But the real founder of the Lakhmid kingdom was 'Amr ibn-'Adi ibn-Nasr ibn-Rabfah ibn-Lakhm, a son of Jadhlmah's sister, who had married a servant of Jadhimah. 'Amr established himself in al-Hirah, which he made his capital.

With the establishment of the Nasrid or Lakhmid dynasty in the latter part of the third century of our era we begin to tread on firm historical ground. The names of some twenty Lakhmid kings have been handed down to us, but the first clearly delineated personage is Imru'-al-Qays I (f A.D. 328), whose epitaph is the oldest proto-Arabic inscription yet discovered. The script is a variation of the Nabataean character and shows many signs of transition towards the later North Arabic script, particularly in the matter of joining the letters.<sup>2</sup>

A descendant of Imru'-al-Qays was al-Nu'man I al-A'war (the one-eyed, ca. 400-418), celebrated in poetry and legend. He is credited with having built al-Khawarnaq, a famous castle near al-Hirah, as a residence for Bahram Gor, the son of Yaz-dagird I (399-420), who was anxious to have his son brought up in the salubrious air of the desert. Al-Khawarnaq was declared a miracle of art and was ascribed by later historians to a Byzantine architect who suffered the fate common to many legendary architects in being put to death on the completion of his work—a favourite motif in such stories—so that the construction might never be duplicated. Al-Nu'man remained a pagan throughout his life and at one

time persecuted his own Christian subjects and prevented the Arabs from visiting St. Simeon Stylites, though in the latter part of his life he felt more kindly disposed towards Christianity. Simeon was himself an Arab and the crowds of the desert flocked to see the wonderful sight of this ascetic living on a pillar-top. The erection of al-Sadlr, a castle associated in poetry with al-Khawarnaq and lying "in the midst of the desert between al-Hirah and Syria",<sup>3</sup> is also attributed to al-Nu'man. Al-Sadlr and other Lakhmid hlrachs are today but names. None are identified except al-Khawarnaq.

Al-Hirah at the height of its power

Under al-Nu'man's son and successor, al-Mundhir I (ca.

<sup>1</sup> The Azd and the Tanukh were confederated into one tribe in al-'Iraq.

<sup>6</sup> Dussaud, *Les Arabes en Syrie*, pp. 34-5.  
ii, p. 375.

<sup>8</sup> Yiqut, vol.

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A.D. 418-62), al-Hirah began to play its important rôle in the events of the day. So great was al-Mundhir's influence that he could force the Persian priests to crown Bahram, once the protégé of his father, over the claims of a powerful pretender to the throne. In 421 he fought beside his Sâsânid suzerain against the Byzantines.

In the first half of the sixth century al-Hirah was ruled by another Mundhir, al-Mundhir III (ca. 505-54), whom the Arabs call ibn-Mâ'-al-Samâ' jMâ'-al-Samâ' (the water of heaven) being a sobriquet of his mother Mâriyah or Mawiyah. His was the most illustrious rule in Lakhmid annals. He proved a thorn in the side of Roman Syria. His

raids devastated the land as far as Antioch until he found more than a match in the Ghassânid al-Hârith.<sup>15 16</sup> About this al-Mundhir, al-Aghani\* relates the curious story of the two boon-companions whom he is said to have buried alive in the course of a carousal.

His son and successor, 'Amr, surnamed ibn-Hind (A.D. 554-69), though tyrannical was a munificent patron of poets. The greatest bards of Arabia then living, such as Tarafah ibn-al-'Abd, al-Hârith ibn-Hillizah and 'Amr ibn-Kulthüm (three of the seven reputed authors of "Golden Odes", Mu allaqât), flocked to his court. 'Amr, like other Lakhmid and Jafnid monarchs, recognized ' in the contemporary poets leaders of public opinion and potential publicity agents. Hence the lavish bounties which he and other patrons, with the hope of seeing their influence extended among the Bedouins, bestowed on the poets who frequented their courts. 'Amr met his death at the hand of his protégé ibn-Kulthüm, who thus avenged an insult to his mother by the king.

Hind, the mother of 'Amr, was a Christian princess of Ghassân; others say of Kindah. She founded in the capital a convent which survived into the second century of Islam; <sup>17</sup> Yâqût<sup>4</sup> has Chris-preserved for us its dedicatory inscription. In this inscription <sup>tion,zed</sup> Hind calls herself "the maid of Christ and the mother of His slave ['Amr] and the daughter of His slaves". That there were Christians among the populace professing the East Syrian creed is indicated by the many references to the bishops of al-Hirah, one of whom lived as early as A.D. 410.

The Lakhmid dynasty came to an end with al-Nu'man III abu-Qabus (ca. 580—602), son of al-Mundhir IV. He was a patron of the famous poet al-Nabighah al-Dhubyani before the latter was driven from al-Hirah as a result of a false accusation. Having been brought up in a Christian home, al-

Nu man was converted to Christianity and became the first and only Christian Lakhmid king. That no member of the Lakhmid house saw fit before this time to adopt Christianity, the faith of the Byzantines, may be explained on the ground that the Hirah kings found it to their political interest to remain friendly with Persia. Al-Numan was baptized into the East Syrian (Nestorian) communion, the one least objectionable to Persia.

The Arab civilization of al-Hirah, which faced Persia, did not attain the high degree reached by the Arab civilizations of Petra, Palmyra and Ghassanland under Syro-Byzantine influence. The Arabs of al-Hirah spoke Arabic as a daily language but used Syriac in writing, just as the Nabataeans and Palmyrenes spoke Arabic and wrote in Aramaic. The Christians in the lower valley of the Euphrates acted as the teachers of the heathen Arabs in reading, writing and religion. From al-Hirah the beneficent influences spread into Arabia proper. There are those who hold that it was the Syrian church of al-Hirah which was responsible for the introduction of Christianity into Najran. According to traditions preserved in ibn-Rustah<sup>1</sup> it was from al-Hirah that the Quraysh acquired the art of writing and the system of false belief.<sup>2</sup> From this it is clear that Persian cultural influences likewise found their way into the peninsula through the Lakhmid kingdom.

After al-Nu'man Iyas ibn-Qabisah of the Tayyi' ruled (602-11), but beside him stood a Persian resident in control of the government. The Persian kings thus incautiously abolished the system of Arab vassalage and appointed Persian governors to whom the Arab chieftains were subordinate. Such was still the arrangement in 633 when Khalid ibn-al-Walid at the head of the Moslem army received the submission of al-Hirah.<sup>8</sup>

\$. Kindah As the Ghassanids stood in relation to the Byzantines and the Lakhmids to the Persians so did the Kindite kings of Central

<sup>1</sup> Al-A'laq al-Nafisah, ed. de Goeje (Leyden, 1892), p. 192, 11. 2-3, and p. 217, 11. 9-10. Cf. ibn-Qutaybah, pp. 273-4.

<sup>1</sup> Ar. tandaqah<sub>t</sub> from Pers, tandik — Magian, fire-worshipper; Manichaeism, heretic. • Today where al-Hirah once stood lie a few low mounds.

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Arabia stand in relation to the last Tubba's of al-Yaman. Within the peninsula they were the only rulers to receive the title of malik (king), usually reserved by the Arabians for foreign potentates.

Though of South Arabian origin and, at the time preceding the rise of Islam, settled in the region to the west of Hadramawt, the powerful Kindah tribe is not mentioned in early South Arabian inscriptions; the first mention in history is in the fourth century of the Christian era. The reputed founder of the dynasty, Hujr, surnamed Akil al-Murar, was according to tradition a stepbrother of the Himyarite Hassan ibn-Tubba<sup>c</sup> and was appointed by the latter about A.D. 480 ruler of certain tribes whom the Tubba' had conquered in Central Arabia.<sup>1</sup> In this position Hujr was succeeded by his son 'Amr. 'Amr's son al-Harith, the most valiant king of Kindah, was the one who for a short time after the death of the Persian Emperor Qubadh, rendered himself master of al-Hirah, only to lose it (about 529) to the Lakhmid al-Mundhir III. Al-Mundhir put al-Harith to death in 529 together with about fifty other members of the royal family, a fatal blow to the power of Kindah. Al-Harith may have resided at al-Anbar, a city on the Euphrates about forty miles north-west of Baghdad.

. The discord among the sons of al-Harith, each heading a tribe, led to the dissolution of the confederacy and the final downfall of the ephemeral kingdom. The remnant of Kindah were forced back to their settlements in Hadramawt. This brought to an end one of the two rivals of al-Hirah in the three-cornered fight for supremacy among the North Arabians, the other rival being the Ghassanids. The celebrated poet Imru'-al-Qays, composer of one of the greatest of the Golden Odes,<sup>2</sup> was a descendant of the royal Kindah line and made many vain attempts to regain a part of his heritage. His poems are bitter with rancour against the Lakhmids. In quest of aid he went as far as Constantinople, hoping to win the sympathy of Justinian, the enemy of al-Hirah. On his way back, so the tradition goes, he was poisoned (about 540) at Ankara by an emissary of the emperor.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Işfahani, *Tdrikh*, p. 140; ibn-Qutaybah, p. 308; Gunnar Olinder, *The Kings of Kinda* (Lund, 1927), pp. 38-9.

<sup>2</sup> See below, p. 94.

<sup>8</sup> Al-Ya'qubi, *Tarikh*, ed. M. Th. Houtsma (Leyden, 1883), vol. i, p. 251; Olinder, pp. 117-18.

In early Islam a number of Kindites came into prominence« Chief among these was al-Ash'ath ibn-Qays, the Hadramawt chieftain who distinguished himself in the conquest of Syria and al-'Iraq and was rewarded by the governorship of a Persian province. The descendants of al-Ash'ath held important posts under the Umayyad caliphs in Syria. Al-Muqanna',<sup>1</sup> the veiled prophet of Khurasan who posed as an incarnation of the deity and for years defied the forces of the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Mahdi, was probably a Persian, not a Kindite. The earliest philosopher of Arabian

blood was Ya'qub ibn-Ishaq al-Kindi,<sup>2</sup> whose millennium Baghdad celebrated in 1962.

Kindah's rise is interesting not only in itself but as the first attempt in inner Arabia to unite a number of tribes around the central authority of one common chief. As such the experiment established a precedent for al-Hijaz and Muhammad.

A hero of Thomas Moore's *Lalla Rookh*.  
p. 370.

See below,

British Museum

#### NABATAEAN BRONZE COIN

Obv. Trajan's head; rev. city-goddess of Petra, to be identified with Allat-Manatu

#### CHAPTER VII

#### AL-HIJÁZ ON THE EVE OF THE RISE OF ISLAM

IN its broad outline Arabian history comprises three main eras:

1. The Sabaean-Himyarite period, ending at the beginning of the sixth century after Christ;
2. The Jahiliyah period, which in a sense extends from "the creation of Adam" down to the mission of Muhammad, but more particularly, as used here, covers the century immediately preceding the rise of Islam;
3. The Islamic period, extending to the present day.



The term jahiliyah, usually rendered “time of ignorance” or The jahi-“barbarism”, in reality means the period in which Arabia had <sup>liyah days</sup> no dispensation, no inspired prophet, no revealed book; for ignorance and barbarism can hardly be applied to such a cultured and lettered society as that developed by the South Arabians. The word occurs several times in the Koran (3 : 148, 5 : 55, 33 : 33, 48 : 26). In his anxiety to wean his people from pre-Islamic religious ideas, particularly from idolatry, the intensely monotheistic Muhammad declared that the new religion was to obliterate all that had gone before it. This w’as later interpreted as constituting a ban on all pre-Islamic ideas and ideals. But ideas are hard to kill, and no one person’s veto is strong enough to cancel the past.

Unlike the South Arabians the vast majority of the population of North Arabia, including al-Hijaz and Najd, is nomadic. The history of the Bedouins is in the main a record of guerilla wars called ayyam al- Arab (the days of the Arabians), in which there was a great deal of raiding and plundering but little bloodshed. The sedentary population of al-Hijaz and Najd developed no ancient culture of its own. In this they were unlike their neighbours and kindred, the Nabataeans, Palmyrenes, Ghassanids and Lakhmids. The Nabataeans, and to a larger extent the

Palmyrenes, were partially Aramaicized; the Ghassanids and Lakhmids were South Arabian colonists amidst Syro-Byzantine and Syro-Persian cultures. Our study of the Jahiliyah period therefore limits itself to a survey of the battles between the northern Bedouin tribes in the century preceding the Hijrah and to an account of the outside cultural influences operating among the settled inhabitants of al-Hijaz preparatory to the rise of Islam.

The light of authentic record illumines but faintly the Jahiliyah age. Our sources for this period, in which the North Arabians had no system of writing, are limited to traditions, legends, proverbs, and above all to poems, none of which, however, were committed to writing before the second and third centuries after the Hijrah, two to four hundred years after the events which they were supposed to commemorate. Though traditional and legendary this data is none the less valuable; for what a people believe, even if untrue, has the same influence over their lives as if it were true. The North Arabians developed no system of writing until almost the time of Muhammad. The only three pre-Islamic Arabic inscriptions thus far found (besides the proto-Arabic inscription of Imru'-al-Qays in al-Namarah, 328) are those of Zabad south-east of Aleppo (512), of Harran in al-Laja (568) and umm-al-Jimal (same century).

The term Arabians, as already explained, includes in its broad sense all the inhabitants of the peninsula. In its narrow sense it implies the North Arabians, who did not figure in international affairs until the unfolding of the Islamic power. Likewise the term Arabic signifies the Himyarite-Sabaeen as well as the northern dialect of al-Hijaz, but since the latter became the sacred language of Islam and utterly superseded the southern dialects of al-Yaman it became the Arabic par excellence. Therefore, when we speak after this of the Arabians and of Arabic we have particularly in mind the North Arabian people and the language of the Koran.

The "days of the Arabians"

The Ayyam al-'Arab were intertribal hostilities generally arising from disputes over cattle, pasture-lands or springs. They afforded ample opportunity for plundering and raiding, for the manifestation of single-handed deeds of heroism by

the champions of the contending tribes and for the exchange of vitriolic satires on the part of the poets, the spokesmen of the warring parties. Though always ready for a fight the Bedouin was not

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necessarily eager to be killed. His encounters, therefore, were not as sanguinary as their accounts would lead one to believe. Nevertheless these Ayyam provided a safety valve for a possible overpopulation in Bedouin land, whose inhabitants were normally in a condition of semi-starvation and to whom the fighting mood was a chronic state of mind. Through them vendetta became one of the strongest religio-social institutions in Bedouin life.

The course of events on each of these “days”, as reported to us, follows somewhat the same pattern. At first only a few men come to blows with one another in consequence of some border dispute or personal insult. The quarrel of the few then becomes the business of the whole. Peace is finally restored by the intervention of some neutral party. The tribe with the fewer casualties pays its adversary blood money for the surplus of dead. Popular memory keeps the recollection of the heroes alive for centuries to come.

Such was the case of the Day of Bu'ath,<sup>1</sup> fought between the two related tribes of al-Madinah, the Aws and the Khazraj, some years before the migration of the Prophet and his followers to that town. The Days of al-Fijar (transgression), so called because they fell in the holy months during which fighting was prohibited, were fought between the Prophet's family, the Quraysh, and their allies the Kinanah on one side, and the Hawazin on the other. Muhammad as a young man is said to have participated in one of the four combats.<sup>2</sup>

One of the earliest and most famous of these Bedouin wars was The the Harb al-Basus, fought toward the end of the fifth century of <sup>asQs</sup> our era between the banu-Bakr<sup>3</sup> and their kinsmen the banu-Taghlib in north-eastern Arabia. Both tribes were Christianized and considered themselves descendants of Wa'il. The conflict arose over nothing more than a she-camel, the property of an old woman of Bakr named Basus, which had been wounded by a Taghlib chief.<sup>4</sup> According to the legendary history of the Ayyam this war was carried on for forty years with reciprocal raiding and plundering, while its flames were fanned by poetical

<sup>1</sup> Aghani, vol. ii, p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-Hisham, pp. 117-19; quoted by Yaqut, vol. iii, p. 579.

<sup>3</sup> The city of Diyar-Bakr (Diarbekr) still bears the name of this tribe.

<sup>4</sup> Aghani, vol. iv, pp. 140-52; abu-Tammam, IJamdsah, pp. 420-23; 'Iqd, vol. iii, P-95-

The

Day of

Dahis

North Arabic in its influence as a language

exhortations. The fratricidal struggle was brought to an end about 525 through the intercession of al-Mundhir III of al-Hirah, but only after the exhaustion of both sides. The names of the leaders on the Taghlib side, Kulayb ibn-Rabl'ah and his brother, the hero-poet Muhalhil (f ca. A.D. 531), as well as the name of Jassas ibn-Murrah on the Bakr side, are

still household words in all Arabic-speaking lands. This Muhalhil became the Zir of the still popular romance Qissat al-Zir.

Hardly less famous is the Day of Dahis and al-Ghabra', the best known event of the pagan period. This war was fought between the 'Abs and its sister tribe Dhubyan in Central Arabia. Ghata-fan was the traditional ancestor of both. The occasion was the unfair conduct of the Dhubyanites in a race between a horse called Dahis belonging to the chieftain of 'Abs and a mare named al-Ghabra owned by the sheikh of Dhubyan. The struggle broke out in the second half of the sixth century, not long after the conclusion of the Basus peace, and persisted at intervals for several decades into Islamic times.<sup>1</sup> It was in this war that 'Antarah (or 'Antar) ibn-Shaddad al-'Absi (ca. A.D. 525-615), the Achilles of the Arabian heroic age, distinguished himself as a poet and warrior.

No people in the world, perhaps, manifest such enthusiastic admiration for literary expression and are so moved by the word, spoken or written, as the Arabs. Hardly any language seems capable of exercising over the minds of its users such irresistible influence as Arabic. Modern audiences in Baghdad, Damascus and Cairo can be stirred to the highest degree by the recital of poems, only vaguely comprehended, and by the delivery of orations in the classical tongue, though it be only partially understood. The rhythm, the rhyme, the music, produce on them the effect of what they call "lawful magic" (sihr hala,r).

Typical Semites, the Arabians created or developed no great art of their own. Their artistic nature found expression through one medium: speech. If the Greek gloried primarily in his statues and architecture, the Arabian found in his ode {qasidah) and the Hebrew in his psalm, a finer mode of self-

expression. “The beauty of man”, declares an Arabic adage, “lies in the eloquence of his tongue.” “Wisdom”, in a late saying, “has alighted on three things: the brain of the Franks, the hands of the Chinese and the <sup>1</sup> Aghdni, vol. ix, p. 150, vol. vii, p. 150.

ch. VII AL-HIJAZ ON THE EVE OF THE RISE OF ISLAM tongue of the Arabs.” <sup>1</sup> Eloquence, i.e. ability to express one’s self forcefully and elegantly in both prose and poetry, together with archery and horsemanship were considered in the Jahi-Ilyah period the three basic attributes of “the perfect man” {al-kamil). By virtue of its peculiar structure Arabic lent itself admirably to a terse, trenchant, epigrammatic manner of speech. Islam made full use of this feature of the language and of this psychological peculiarity of its people. Hence the “miraculous character” (i’jaz) of the style and composition of the Koran, adduced by Moslems as the strongest argument in favour of the genuineness of their faith. The triumph of Islam was to a certain extent the triumph of a language, more particularly of a book.

From the heroic age of Arabic literature, covering the Jahi-The Ilyah period and extending from about A.D. 525 to 622, we have <sup>heroic</sup> preserved for us a few proverbs, certain legends and in particular a fairly abundant amount of poetry—all compiled and edited in later Islamic days. No scientific literature existed beyond a few magical, meteorological and medicinal formulas. Proverbs constitute a fair index of folk mentality and experience. Luqman the Sage (al-hakim)> in whose mouth many of the ancient words of wisdom were put, was either an Abyssinian or a Hebrew. Tradition has handed down the names of a number of wise men and women of the Jahillyah, e.g. Aktham ibn-Sayfi, Hajib ibn-Zurarah and Hind the daughter of al-Khuss. In the Majma al-Amthal by al-Maydani <sup>2</sup> (f 1124) and in the Amthal al-

Arab of al-Mufaddal al-Dabbi <sup>3</sup> (f 786) we have many specimens of this pre-Islamic wisdom literature.

Prose could not have been well represented in the Jahillyah literature since no system of writing had then been fully developed. Yet we have a few pieces, mainly legends and traditions, composed in Islamic days, which purport to have come from earlier times. These stories deal mostly with genealogies {ansab) and the intertribal combats, the above-discussed Days of the Arabians. The Arabian genealogist, like his brother the Arabian historian, had a horror vacui and his fancy had no difficulty in bridging gaps and filling vacancies; in this way he has succeeded in giving us in most instances a continuous record

<sup>1</sup> Cf. al-Jahiz, Majmu'at Rasail (Cairo, 1324), pp. 41-3; 'Iqd, vol. i, p. 125.

\* 2 vols. (Cairo, 1310); G. Freytag, Arabum proverbialia (Bonn, 1838-43).

<sup>8</sup> 2 vols. (Constantinople, 1300); al-Mufaddal ibn-Salamah (f ca. 920), al-Fakhir, ed. C. A. Storey (Leyden, 1915).

from Adam on, in more modest compass, from Ishmael and Abraham. Ibn-Durayd's Kitab al-Ishtiqaq<sup>x</sup> and the encyclopaedic work of abu-al-Faraj al-Isbahani (or Isfahani, f A.D. 967) entitled Kitab al-Aghani (the book of songs) comprise most valuable data on the subject of genealogies. Specimens of rhymed prose attributed to pre-Islamic oracles have likewise survived.

## Poetry

It was only in the field of poetical expression that the pre-Islamic Arabian excelled. Herein his finest talents found a

field. The Bedouin's love of poetry was his one cultural asset.

Arabic literature, like most literatures, sprang into existence with an outburst of poetry; but, unlike many others, its poetry seems to have issued forth full grown. The oldest pieces of poetry extant seem to have been composed some one hundred and thirty years before the Hijrah in connection with the War of al-Basus, but these odes, with their rigid conventions, presuppose a long period of development in the cultivation of the art of expression and the innate capacities of the language. The poets of the middle part of the sixth century have never been surpassed. The early Moslem poets as well as the later and present-day versifiers regarded and still do regard the ancient productions as models of unapproachable excellence. These early poems were committed to memory, transmitted by oral tradition and finally recorded in writing during the second and third centuries of the Hijrah. Modern critical research makes it evident that numerous revisions, editions and modifications were made to bring them into accord with the spirit of Islam <sup>2</sup>

The rhymed prose used by the oracles and soothsayers (kuhhadri) may be considered the first stage in the development of the poetical form. The Koran exhibits such a style. The song of the camel-driver (JyudaK) may have been the second. Native Arabic tradition which tries to explain the origin of poetry in the attempt of the cameleer to sing in time with the rhythmic movements of the camel's pace may after all contain a germ of truth. The word hadi, singer, is synonymous with sa'iq, camel-driver.

Raj az, consisting of four or six feet to the line, evolved out of rhymed prose and constitutes the oldest and simplest metre. "It is the first-born child of poetry", so runs the Arabic



definition, “with rhymed prose for a father and song for a mother.”

<sup>1</sup> Ed. F. Wiistenfeld (Gottingen, 1854).

- Cf. Husayn, al-Adab al-Jdhili (Cairo, 1927).

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In this heroic age of literature poetry was the only means of literary expression. The qasidah (ode) represented the only, as well as a most finished, type of poetical composition. Muhalhil classical (t<sup>ca</sup>- 531), the Taghlib hero of the Basus War, is credited with being the first to compose these long poems. It is very likely that the ode developed in connection with the Days of the Arabians, particularly among the Taghlib or Kindah tribes. Imru'-al-Qays (f ca. 540), originally a Qahtani from South Arabia, belonged to Kindah. Though one of the most ancient of bards, he is generally esteemed the greatest, the amir (prince) of poets. 'Amr ibn-Kulthum (f ca. 600), on the other hand, was a Tagh-libite of the Rabfah from North Arabia. Though speaking different dialects these poets produced odes which exhibit the same literary form.

Appearing with Homeric suddenness the qasidah surpasses even the Iliad and the Odyssey in metrical complexity and elaborateness. And when it makes its first appearance on the pages of history the qasidah seems governed by a fixed set of conventions: stereotyped beginning, common epithets, stock figures of speech and same choice of themes—all of which point to a long period of development. Rich in animated passion, expressed in forceful and compact language, the ode is poor in original ideas, in thought-provoking imagery, and is consequently lacking in universal appeal. The poet and not the poetry is more often the thing

to be admired. Translated into a foreign language it loses its value. The personal, subjective element prevails. The theme is realistic, the horizon limited, the point of view local. No national epic was ever developed by the Arabians and no dramatic work of first-class importance.

Among the ancient odes the so-called "Seven Mu'allaqat" (The (suspended)) hold first place. They are still honoured throughout the Arabic-speaking world as masterpieces of poetical composition. Legend has it that each of these odes was awarded the annual prize at the fair of 'Ukaz and was inscribed in golden letters and suspended on the walls of the Ka'bah.<sup>1</sup> Their genesis is explained in this way: at 'Ukaz, between Nakhlah and al-Ta'if in al-Hijaz, was held an annual fair, a sort of literary congress whither hero-poets resorted to celebrate their exploits and contend for the coveted first honour. A poet made a name

<sup>1</sup> Al-Suyufi, al-Muzhtr (Cairo, 1282), vol. ii, p. 240.

for himself here or nowhere. The Fair (süq) of 'Ukaz stood in pre-Islamic days for a kind of Académie française of Arabia.

The annual fair, we are told, was held during the sacred months when fighting was taboo. The pagan Arabian calendar was like the later Moslem one, lunar; the first three months of its spring season, i.e. dhu-al-Qa'dah, dhu-al-Hijjah and Muharram, coincided with the period of peace. The fair provided ample opportunity for the exhibition of native wares, and for trade and exchange of commodities. We can easily visualize the sons of the desert flocking to these annual peaceful gatherings, lingering around the booths, sipping date wine and enjoying to the full the tunes of the singing girls.

Though the first ode said to have won the favour of the judges of 'Ukâz was that of Imru'-al-Qays (f ca. 540),<sup>no</sup> collection of the Mu'allaqât was attempted until the latter Umayyad period. Hammâd al-Râwiyah, the famous rhapsodist who flourished in the middle of the eighth century, chose the Seven Golden Odes, undoubtedly from among many others, and compiled them into a separate group. This collection has been translated into most European languages.<sup>1</sup>

The pre-

Islamic poec

Aside from the famous Seven Odes we have from pre-Islamic poetry a collection named, after its compiler, al-Mufaddal al-Dabbi (j\* ca. 785), al-Mufaddallyât? containing one hundred and twenty odes composed by lesser lights, a number of diwans (anthologies) and a large number of fragments and excerpts in the Dîwân al~Hamasah, edited by abu-Tammâm (j\* ca. 845) and in the Kitab al-Aghani of al-Isbahani (j" 967).

The Arabian poet (shavrf as the name indicates, was originally one endowed with knowledge hidden from the common man, which knowledge he received from a demon, his special shaytân (satan). As a poet he was in league with the unseen powers and could by his curses bring evil upon the enemy. Satire (hija'j was therefore a very early form of Arabic poetry.<sup>3</sup>

As his office developed the poet acquired a variety of functions. In battle his tongue was as effective as his people's bravery. In peace he might prove a menace to public order by his fiery harangues. His poems might arouse a tribe to action in

<sup>1</sup> See William Jones, Works (London, 1799), vol. iv, pp. 245-335; Anne and Wilfrid S. Blunt, The Seven Golden Odes of Pagan Arabia (London, 1903).

<sup>2</sup> Ed. C. J. Lyall, 3 vols. (Oxford & Leyden, 1921-4).

- Balaam was a type of primitive Arabian satirist (Num. 23 : 7).

ch. vii AL-HIJAZ ON THE EVE OF THE RISE OF ISLAM 95 the same manner as the tirade of a demagogue in a modern political campaign. As the press agent, the journalist, of his day his favour was sought by princely gifts, as the records of the courts of al-Hirah and Ghassan show. His poems, committed to memory and transmitted from one tongue to another, offered an invaluable means of publicity. He was both moulder and agent of public opinion. Qaf al-lisan (cutting off the tongue) was the formula used for subsidizing him and avoiding his satires.

Besides being oracle, guide, orator and spokesman of his community the poet was its historian and scientist, in so far as it had a scientist. Bedouins measured intelligence by poetry. "Who dares dispute my tribe ... its pre-eminence in horsemen, poets and numbers?" exclaims a bard in al-Aghani} In these three elements, military power, intelligence and numbers, lay the superiority of a tribe. As the historian and scientist of the tribe the poet was well versed in its genealogy and folklore, cognizant of the attainments and past achievements of its members, familiar with their rights, pasture-lands and border-lines. Furthermore, as a student of the psychological weaknesses and historical failures of the rival tribes it was his business to expose these shortcomings and hold them up to ridicule.

Aside from its poetic interest and the worth of its grace and elegance, the ancient poetry, therefore, has historical importance as source material for the study of the period in which it was composed. In fact it is our only quasi-contemporaneous data. It throws light on all phases of pre-Islamic life. Hence the adage, "Poetry is the public register \diwan\ of the Arabians".<sup>2</sup>

The ideal of Arab virtue as revealed by this ancient pagan poetry was expressed in the terms *muruaḥ*, manliness (later Bedouin virtue) and *ʿird* (honour).<sup>3</sup> The component elements of *muruaḥ* were courage, loyalty and generosity. Courage was measured by the number of raids (sing, *ghazw*) undertaken. Generosity manifested itself in his readiness to sacrifice his camel at the coming of a guest or on behalf of the poor and the helpless.

The name of Hatim al-Ta'i (fl. ca. A.D. 605) has been handed down to the present day as the personification of the Bedouin ideal of hospitality. As a lad in charge of his father's camels he

<sup>1</sup> Vol. viii, p. 77.

\* Muzhir, vol. ii, p. 235.

<sup>3</sup> On *muruaḥ* and *ʿird*, see articles by Bishr Fares in *Encyclopedia of Islam*<sup>^</sup> Supp.

once slaughtered three of the animals to feed passing strangers and distributed the rest among them, which caused his father to expel him from home.<sup>1</sup>

The name of 'Antarah ibn-Shaddad al-ʿAbsi (ca. 525—615), evidently a Christian, has lived through the ages as the paragon of Bedouin heroism and chivalry. Knight, poet, warrior and lover, 'Antarah exemplified in his life those traits greatly esteemed by the sons of the desert. His deeds of

valour as well as his love episodes with his lady, ʿAblah, whose name he immortalized in his famous Mu'allaqah, have become a part of the literary heritage of the Arabic-speaking world. But 'Antarah was born a slave, the son of a black maid. He was, however, freed by his father on the occasion of an encounter with an enemy tribe in which the young man refused to take active part, saying, "A slave knows not how to fight; milking camels is his job". "Charge!" shouted his father, "thou art free."<sup>1</sup>

### Bedouin heathenism

Judged by his poetry the pagan Bedouin of the Jahiliyah age had little if any religion. To spiritual impulses he was lukewarm, even indifferent. His conformity to religious practice followed tribal inertia and was dictated by his conservative respect for tradition. Nowhere do we find an illustration of genuine devotion to a heathen deity. A story told about Imru'-al-Qays illustrates this point. Having set out to avenge the murder of his father he stopped at the temple of dhu-al-Khalasah <sup>3</sup> to consult the oracle by means of drawing arrows.<sup>4</sup> Upon drawing "abandon" thrice he hurled the broken arrows at the idol exclaiming, "Accursed one! had it been thy father who was murdered thou wouldst not have forbidden my avenging him".<sup>5</sup>

Other than the poetical references, our chief sources of information about pre-Islamic heathenism are to be found in the remains of paganism in Islam, in the few anecdotes and traditions embedded in the late Islamic literature and in al-Kalbi's (f 819-20) al-Asnam (the idols). The pagan Arabian developed no mythology, no involved theology and no cosmogony comparable to that of the Babylonians.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Qutaybah, al-Shitr w-al-Shu'ard', ed. de Goeje (Leyden, 1904), P- 124.

<sup>1</sup> Aghani, vol. vii, pp. 149-50; ibn-Qutaybah, p. 130.

<sup>8</sup> The temple stood seven days' journey south of Makkah; its deity was a white stone; al-Kalbi, al-Afnam, ed. Ahmad Zaki (Cairo, 1914), p. 34.

<sup>4</sup> See below, p. 100. Divining by arrows forbidden in Koran 5 : 4, 92.

- Aghani, vol. viii, p. 70.

The Bedouin religion represents the earliest and most primitive form of Semitic belief. The South Arabian cults with their astral features, ornate temples, elaborate ritual and sacrifices represent a higher and later stage of development, a stage reached by sedentary society. The emphasis on sun-worship in the cultured communities of Petra and Palmyra implies an agricultural state where the association has already been made between the life-giving rays of the sun and the growth of vegetation.

The Bedouin's religion, like other forms of primitive belief, is basically animistic. The striking contrast between oasis and desert gave him perhaps his earliest definite conception of the specialized deity. The spirit of the arable land became the beneficent deity to be catered to; that of the arid land the maleficent, the demon, to be feared.<sup>1</sup> .

Even after the conception of a deity was formed, natural objects such as trees, wells, caves, stones, remained sacred objects, since they formed the media through which the worshipper could come into direct contact with the deity. The well in the desert with its cleansing, healing, life-giving water very early became an object of worship. Zamzam's holiness, according to Arabian authors, was pre-Islamic and went back to the time when it supplied water to Hagar and

Ishmael.<sup>2</sup> Yaqut,<sup>3</sup> and after him al-Qazwini,<sup>4</sup> speak of travellers carrying away water from the Well of 'Urwah and offering it as a special present to their relatives and friends. Caves became holy through association with underground deities and forces. Such was originally Ghab-ghab in Nakhlah, where the Arabians sacrificed to al-fUzza.<sup>6</sup> Bal represented the spirit of springs and underground water and must have been introduced into Arabia at the same time as the palm tree. The word left an interesting survival in the Moslem system of taxation, where a distinction is drawn between what Bal waters (i.e. land that needs no irrigation) and what the sky waters.

The Bedouin's astral beliefs centred upon the moon, in whose Solar light he grazed his flocks. Moon-worship implies a pastoral "P<sup>6013</sup> society, whereas sun-worship represents a later agricultural stage. In our own day the Moslem Ruwalah Bedouins imagine

<sup>1</sup> Ar. taqwa<sub>t</sub> piety, is from a stem meaning "to be on one's guard, to fear".

\* Ibn-Hisham, Sirah, p. 71.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. i, p. 434.

<sup>4</sup> 'Ajaib al-Makhlūqat, ed. F. Wiistenfeld (Gottingen, 1849), P« 200.

<sup>4</sup> Kalbi, pp. 18, 20; Yaqut, vol. iii, pp. 77<sup>2</sup>'3-

that their life is regulated by the moon, which condenses the water vapours, distils the beneficent dew on the pasture and makes possible the growth of plants. On the other hand the sun, as they believe, would like to destroy the Bedouins as well as all animal and plant life.



One characteristic feature of all elements of religious belief is their tendency to persist in some form when a higher stage of development has been attained. The survival represents a compromise between these two stages of religious development. Hence Wadd (Koran 71 : 22), the moon-god who stood at the head of the Minaean pantheon. Ibn-Hisham<sup>18</sup> and al-Tabari<sup>19</sup> speak of a sacred palm tree in Najran. Gifts were offered to the tree in the form of weapons, garments and rags which were suspended from it. Dhat-Anwat<sup>20</sup> (that on which things are hung), to which the Makkans resorted annually, was perhaps identical with the tree of al-'Uzza at Nakhlah.<sup>4</sup> Al-Lat in al-Ta'if was represented by a square stone,<sup>5</sup> and dhu-al-Shara in Petra by a quadrangular block of unhewn black stone four feet high and two feet wide. Most of these deities owned each a reserved grazing-land (Juma).

## Jinn

### The daughters of Allah

The Bedouin peopled the desert with living things of beastly nature called jinn or demons. These jinn differ from the gods not so much in their nature as in their relation to man. The gods are on the whole friendly; the jinn, hostile. The latter are, of course, personifications of the fantastic notions of the terrors of the desert and its wild animal life. To the gods belong the regions frequented by man; to the jinn belong the unknown and untrodden parts of the wilderness. A madman (majnun) is but one possessed by the jinn. With Islam the number of jinn was increased, since the heathen deities were then degraded into such beings.<sup>6</sup>

Among the urban population of al-Hijaz, and only about seventeen per cent, of the population was such, the astral stage of paganism was reached early. Al-'Uzza, al-Lat and

Manah, the three daughters of Allah, had their sanctuaries in the land which later became the cradle of Islam. In a weak moment the monotheistic Muhammad was tempted<sup>7</sup> to recognize these powerful deities of Makkah and al-Madinah and make a compromise in their favour, but afterwards he retracted and the revelation is said to have received the form now found in surah 53 : 19-20.<sup>21</sup> Later theologians explained the case according to the principle of *nastkh* and *mansikh*, abrogating and abrogated verses, by means of which God revokes and alters the announcements of His will; this results in the cancellation of a verse and the substitution of another for it (Koran 2 : 100). Al-Lat (from al-Illahah, the goddess) had her sacred tracts (*hima* and *haram*) near al-Ta'if, whither the Makkans and others flocked for pilgrimage and sacrifice. Within such an enclosure no trees could be felled, no game hunted and no human blood shed. Animal and plant life therein partook of the inviolability of the deity there honoured. Of similar origin, were the cities of refuge in Israel. Herodotus<sup>22</sup> mentions this goddess under the name Alilat among the Nabataean deities.

Al-'Uzza (the most mighty, Venus, the morning star) had her cult in Nakhlah east of Makkah. According to al-Kalbi,<sup>23</sup> hers was the most venerated idol among the Quraysh, and Muhammad as a young man offered her a sacrifice. Her sanctuary consisted of three trees. Human sacrifice characterized her cult. She was the Lady 'Uzzay-an to whom a South Arabian offered a golden image on behalf of his sick daughter, Amat-'Uzzay-an<sup>24</sup> (the maid of al-'Uzza). 'Abd-al-'Uzza was a favourite proper name at the rise of Islam.

Manah (from *manly ah*, allotted fate) was the goddess of destiny<sup>25</sup> and as such represented an earlier phase of religious life.<sup>26</sup> Her main sanctuary consisted of a black

stone in Qudayd on the road between Makkah and Yathrib (later al-Madinah) and she was especially popular with the Aws and the Khazraj, who rallied to the support of the Prophet on his fateful Hijrah from Makkah. As an independent deity her name, associated with dhu-al-Shara, appears in the Nabataean inscriptions of al-Hijr.<sup>7</sup> To the present day Arabic versifiers blame all misfortunes on al-manaya or al-dahr (time).

## The Makkao Ka'bah

### Allah

Since the mother's blood rather than the father's formed the original bond of kinship among the Semites and because the family organization was first matriarchal, the Arabian goddess preceded the god as an object of worship.

Hubal (from Aram, for vapour, spirit), evidently the chief deity of al-Ka\*bah, was represented in human form. Beside him stood ritual arrows used for divination by the soothsayer {kahin, from Aramaic} who drew lots by means of them. The tradition in ibn-Hisham,<sup>1</sup> which makes 'Amr ibn-Luhayy the importer of this idol from Moab or Mesopotamia, may have a kernel of truth in so far as it retains a memory of the Aramaic origin of the deity.<sup>2</sup> At the conquest of Makkah by Muhammad Hubal shared the lot of the other idols and was destroyed.

The pagan Ka'bah, which became the Palladium of Islam, was an unpretentious cube-like (hence the name) building of primitive simplicity, originally roofless, serving as a shelter for a black meteorite which was venerated as a fetish. At the birth of Islam the structure was that rebuilt in 608 probably by an Abyssinian from the wreckage of a Byzantine or Abyssinian ship destroyed on the shore of the

Red Sea.<sup>3</sup> The usual sacred territory {haram} spread around it. Annual pilgrimages were made thither and special sacrifices offered.

Moslem tradition maintains that the Ka'bah was originally built by Adam according to a celestial prototype and after the Deluge rebuilt by Abraham and Ishmael.<sup>4</sup> Its custody remained in the hands of the descendants of Ishmael until the proud banu-Jurhum, and later the banu-Khuza'ah, who introduced idol worship, took possession of it. Then came the Quraysh, who continued the ancient Ishmaelite line. While engaged in the rebuilding Ishmael received from Gabriel the Black Stone, still set in the south-east corner of the structure, and was instructed in the ceremonies of the pilgrimage {hajj}.

[1](#)

Ahmed Fakhry, *An Archaeological Journey to Yemen*, vol. i (Cairo. 1952). pp. 29-56; Wendell Phillips, *Qataban and Sheba* (New York 1955); Richard L. Bowen and Frank P Albright *Archaeological Discoveries in South Arabia* (Baltimore 1958)-

[2](#)

Faris, p. 45                      For description of ruins see al- Azm, pt. 2, pp. 50 seq

[3](#)

Murui al-Dhahab. ed. and tr. de Meynard and de Courteille. vol. iii (Paris. 1864).

[4](#)

P- 366.

...

[5](#)

Tarikh Sint Muluk al-Ard w-al-Anbtya ,ed. Gottwaldt (Leipzig, 1844), P- >26.

[6](#)

<sup>1</sup> Buldan. vol. iv, p. 383.

[7](#)

Heb. Nebayoth, Assyr. Nabaitai, Nabaitu, are apparently not the Nabataeans.

[8](#)

Gen. 14 : 6, 36 : 20.  
16; Ob. 3-4.

[27](#) Cf. 2 Ch. 25 : 12; Jer. 49 :

[9](#)

67

[10](#)

Assyrian Hauranu (cf. Luckenbill, vol. i, §§ 672, 821), biblical Bashan, classical Auranitis.

[11](#)

Tarikh (Constantinople, 1286), vol. i, pp. 76-7.

[12](#)

<sup>8</sup> Op. cit. pp. 115-22.  
217-21.

[13](#) Muruj, vol. iii, pp.

[13](#)

<sup>c</sup> Al-Ma arif, ed. F. Wustenfelf (Gottingen, 1850), pp. 314-16.

[14](#)

<sup>0</sup> Consult Leone Caetani, Annali dell'Islam (Milan, 1910), vol. iii, p. 928.

[15](#)

Procopius, Bk. I, ch. 17, §§ 45-8; Malalas, pp. 434-5, 445, 460 seq.

[16](#)

\* Vol. xix, pp. 86-8. Cf. ibn-Qutaybah, p. 319; Içfahâni, Tarîkh, p. m.

[17](#)

■ Tabari, vol. ii, pp. 1882, 1903.  
709.

<sup>4</sup> Vol. ii, p.

[18](#)

Sirah, p. 22.

[18](#) Vol. i, p. 922.

<sup>8</sup> Sir ah, p. 844.

[19](#)

<sup>4</sup> Kalbi, pp. 24-7  
: 100.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. p. 16.

<sup>6</sup> Koran 37 : 158, 6

[20](#)

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Koran 22 : 51-2, 17 : 74-6.

[21](#)

Al-Baydawi, Anwar al-Tanzil, ed. H. O. Fleischer, vol. i (Leipzig, 1846),

[22](#)

pp. 636-7; Tabari, Tafsir al-Quran, vol. xxvii, pp. 34 seq., yol. xvii, p. 131.

[23](#)

<sup>1</sup> Bk. III, ch. 8.      <sup>8</sup> Pp. 18-19.      [24](#) Nielsen, Handbuch, vol. i, p. 236.

[24](#)

• Cf. Heb. Meni, Is. 65 : 11.      [26](#) Kalbi, p. 13.

[25](#)

<sup>7</sup> Cooke, pp. 217, 219; cf. Lidzbarski, Ephemeris, vol. iii, 1909-15 (Giessen,

[26](#)

1915)» P- 85.

[27](#)

<sup>4</sup> See Josephus, Antiquities, Bk. IV, ch. 4, § 7, ch. 7, § 1.

Allah {allah, al-il ah, the god) was the principal, though not the only, deity of Makkah. The name is an ancient one. It occurs in two South Arabic inscriptions, one a Minaean found at al-'Ula and the other a Sabaean, but abounds in the form HLH in the Lihyanite inscriptions of the fifth century B.C.<sup>5</sup> Lihyan, which <sup>1</sup> Sir ah, pp. 50 seq.

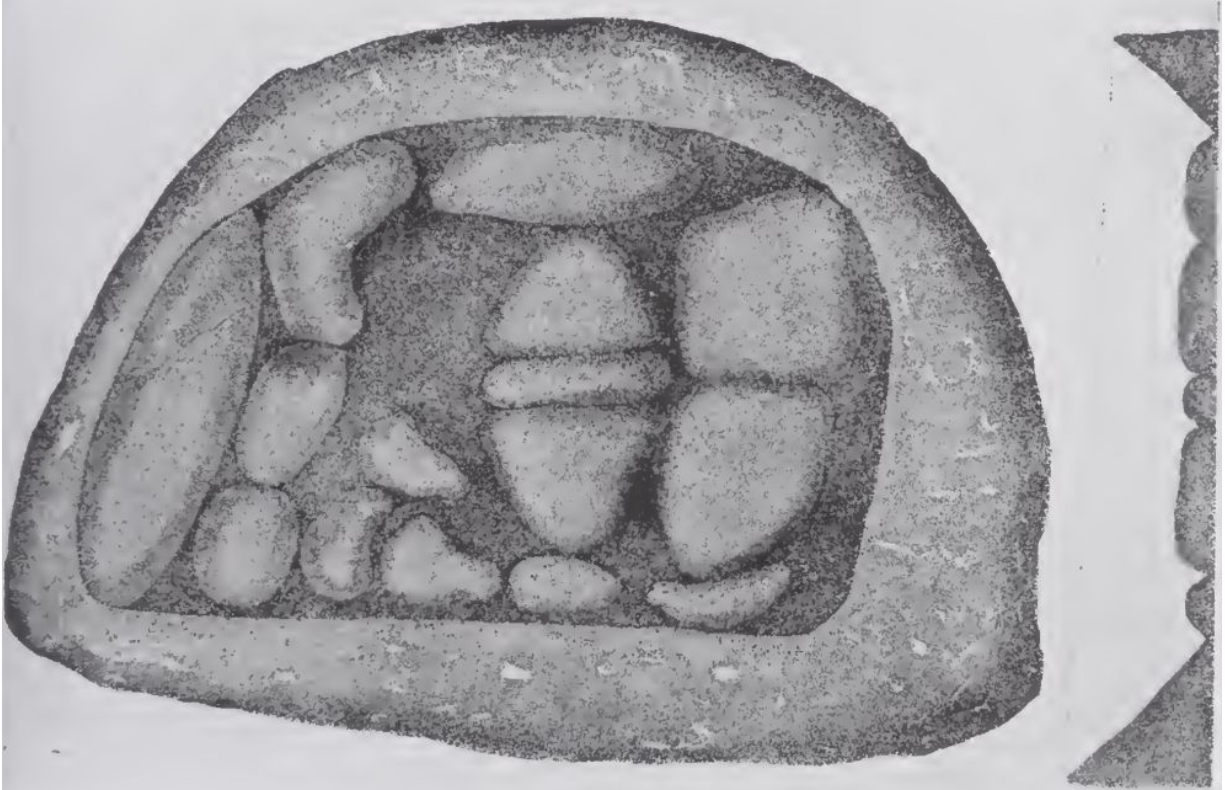
\* The Arabic word for idol, sanam, is clearly an adaptation of Aramaic felim.

\* Cf. al-Azraqi, Akhbar Makkah, ed. Wiistenfeld (Leipzig, 1858), pp. 104-7;

Va'qubi, Tarikh, vol. ii, pp. 17-18. <sup>4</sup> Koran 2 : 118-21. <sup>4</sup> Winnett, p. 30.

evidently got the god from Syria, was the first centre of the worship of this deity in Arabia. The name occurs as Hallah in the Safa inscriptions five centuries before Islam <sup>1</sup> and also in a pre-Islamic Christian Arabic inscription found in umm-al-Jimal, Syria, and ascribed to the sixth century.<sup>2</sup> The name of Muhammad's father was 'Abd-Allah ('Abdullah, the slave or worshipper of Allah). The esteem in which Allah was held by the





From Ali Bey, "Travels"

### THE BLACK STONE OF AL-KA'BAH

pre-Islamic Makkans as the creator and supreme provider and the one to be invoked in time of special peril may be inferred from such koranic passages as 31 : 24, 31; 6 : 137, 109; 10 : 23. Evidently he was the tribal deity of the Quraysh.

Though in an inhospitable and barren valley with an inclement and unhealthy climate this sanctuary at Makkah made al-Hijaz the most important religious centre in North Arabia.

Other pagan deities such as Nasr<sup>3</sup> (vulture), 'Awf (the great bird) bear animal names and suggest totemic origin. As for future life, nowhere in the authenticated ancient

literature do we find expressed a clear and precise idea of it.  
The few vague

<sup>1</sup> Dussaud, *Les Arabes en Syrie*, pp. 141-2.

\* Enno Littmann, *Zeitschrift für Semitistik und verwandte Gebiete*, vol. vii (1929), pp. 197-204.

<sup>3</sup> Koran 71 : 23.

references may be explained as an echo of Christian dogma. The hedonistic Arabian character was too much absorbed in the immediate issues of life to devote much thought to the hereafter. In the words of an old bard:

We spin about and whirl our way through life, Then, rich and poor alike, at last seek rest Below the ground in hollow pits slate-covered;

And there we do abide.<sup>1</sup>

As the Bedouins frequented the settled towns of al-Hijaz for the exchange of their commodities, and particularly during the four months of "holy truce", they became inoculated with some of the more advanced urban beliefs and were initiated into ritualistic practices of the Ka'bah and the offering of sacrifices. Camels and sheep were offered at Makkah and at various stones (ansab) elsewhere which were regarded as idols or altars. In the pilgrimage to some great shrine of the urban Arabians lay the most important religious practice of the nomad. The "holy truce" included what became in the Moslem calendar the eleventh, twelfth and first months of each year (dhu-al-Qa'dah, dhu-al-Hijjah and Muharram) together with a fourth month in the middle (Rajab). The first three were especially set aside for religious observance, and the fourth for trade. Al-Hijaz, through its somewhat central position, its accessibility and its location

on the main caravan route running north and south, offered an unexcelled opportunity for both religious and commercial activity. Thus arose its 'Ukaz fair and its Ka'bah.

The three cities of al-Hijaz: al-Ta'if

Al-Hijaz, the barren country standing like a barrier (Jtjaz) between the uplands of Najd and the low coastal region called Tihamah (netherland), could boast only three cities: al-Ta'if and the two sister cities Makkah and al-Madinah.

Al-Ta'if, nestling among shady trees at an altitude of about 6000 feet and described as "a bit of Syrian earth", was, as it still is, the summer resort of the Makkan aristocracy. Burckhardt, who visited the town in August 1814, declared the scenery en route the most picturesque and delightful he had seen since his departure from Lebanon.<sup>2</sup> Its products included honey, water-melons, bananas, figs, grapes, almonds, peachfis

CH. VII AL-HIJAZ ON THE EVE OF THE RISE OF ISLAM 103 and pomegranates.<sup>1</sup> Its roses were famous for the attar which provided Makkah with its perfumery. Its vines, according to a tradition handed down in al-Aghani<sup>^</sup> were introduced by a Jewess who offered the first slips as a present to a local chief. Its wine, though in great demand, was less expensive than the foreign



From Ibrahim Rif'at, " Mir at al- Haramayn"

MAKKAH FROM THE MOUNTAIN OF ABU-QUBAYS, WITH  
MOUNT HIRÀ' IN THE BACKGROUND, 1908 '

brand celebrated in Arabic poetry. Of all places in the peninsula al-Ta'if came nearest to the koranic description of Paradise in surah 47 : 16-17.

The name Makkah, the Macoraba of Ptolemy,<sup>3</sup> comes from Makkah Sabaean Makuraba, meaning sanctuary, which indicates that it owes its foundation to some religious association and therefore must have been a religious centre long before Muhammad was born. It lies in the Tihamah of southern al-Hijaz, about fortyeight miles from the Red Sea, in a barren, rocky valley described in the Koran (14 : 40) as "unfit for cultivation". The thermo-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ibn-Baffufah, Tuhfat al-Nuzzar, ed. and tr. C. Defremery and B. R. Sanguinetti, 3rd impression, vol. i

(Paris, 1893), pp. 304-5.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. iv, p. 75, ll. 9-10.  
Bk. VI, ch. 7, § 32.

<sup>3</sup> Geographia, ed. Nobbe,

Al-

Madinah

Cultural influences in al-Hijâz:

i. Saba'

meter in Makkah can register almost unbearable heat. When the famous Arab traveller ibn-Battutah<sup>1</sup> of Tangier attempted the circumambulation of the Ka'bah barefooted, he failed because of the "flames" reflected by the stones.

Older still than the south-to-north "spice road" which passes through it, the city early became a midway station between Ma'rib and Ghazzah. The commercially minded and progressive Makkans soon rendered their city a centre of wealth. A Makkan caravan which was involved in the Badr skirmish (Mar. 16, 624) while returning from Ghazzah consisted of a thousand camels, according to al-Waqidi,<sup>2</sup> and carried merchandise worth 50,000 dinars (about £20,000). Under the leadership of the Quraysh, the custodians of the Ka'bah, who were evidently responsible for making that sanctuary a national shrine and the \*Ukaz fair a commercial and intellectual rendezvous, Makkah's pre-eminence became secure.

Yathrib (YTHRB of the Sabaean inscriptions, Jathrippa of Ptolemy),<sup>3</sup> lay some 300 miles north of Makkah and was much more favoured by nature than its southern sister. Besides lying on the "spice road", which connected al-Yaman with Syria, the city was a veritable oasis, especially adapted

for the cultivation of date-palms. In the hands of its Jewish inhabitants, the banu-Nadir and banu-Qurayzah, the town became a leading agricultural centre. Judging by their proper names and the Aramaean vocabulary used in their agricultural life these Jews must have been mostly Judaized clans of Arabian<sup>4</sup> and Aramaean stock, though the nucleus may have been Israelites who fled from Palestine at the time of its conquest by the Romans in the first century after Christ. It was possibly these Aramaic-speaking Jews who changed the name Yathrib into Aramaic Medinta, the explanation of the name al-Madinah (Medina) as “the town” (of the Prophet) being a comparatively late one. The two leading non-Jewish tribes were the Aws and the Khazraj, who came originally from al-Yaman.

Though not in the main stream of world events, pre-Islamic al-Hijaz could hardly be said to have been in a backwater. Its exclusiveness is post-Muhammadan and dates from the eighth

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i, p. 281.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Maghazi, ed. Alfred von Kremer (Calcutta, 1855-6), p. 198.

<sup>2</sup> Bk. VI, ch. 7, § 31; variant Lathrippa.

\* Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 49, designates the Arabian tribes from which they descended. CH. vii AL-HIJAZ ON THE EVE OF THE RISE OF ISLAM 105 year of the Hijrah, when Makkah was captured and the twentyeighth verse of sūrah nine revealed.<sup>1</sup> In the first century after Muhammad, however, there flourished in his birthplace a number of Christian and Jewish physicians, musicians and merchants.

The earlier South Arabian civilization could not have altogether passed away without leaving some trace in its northern successor. The inscription (542-3) of Abrahah dealing with the break of the Ma'rib Dam begins with the following words: "In the power and grace and mercy of the Merciful \Rah-man-an\ and His Messiah and of the Holy Spirit".<sup>2</sup> The word Rahman-an is especially significant because its northern equivalent, al-Rahman, became later a prominent attribute of Allah and one of His names in the Koran and in Islamic theology. Sūrah nineteen is dominated by al-Rahman? Though used in the inscription for the Christian God, yet the word is evidently borrowed from the name of one of the older South Arabian deities. Al-Rahim (the compassionate) also occurs as the name of a deity (rhṁ) in pre-Islamic and Sabaean inscriptions.<sup>4</sup> Another South Arabic inscription uses shirk, association in the sense of polytheism, the kind of shirk against which Muhammad vehemently and fervently preached and which consisted of the worship of one supreme being with whom other minor deities were associated. In the same inscription occurs the technical term denoting unbelief, KFR, as in North Arabic.<sup>5</sup>

The Semitic population of the south-western coast of the Red 2. Abys-Sea found its way thither, as we have learned, by gradual in-<sup>sinia</sup> filtration from south-western Arabia. These Abyssinians, as they were later called, formed an important part of the great international commercial "trust", which under Sabaean-Himyarite leadership monopolized the ancient spice trade, the main artery of which passed through al-Hijaz. For about fifty years prior to the birth of the Prophet, the Abyssinians had their rule established in al-Yaman, and in the year of his birth we find them at the gates of Makkah threatening its precious Ka\*bah with

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 118; cf. Baydâwi, vol. i, p. 383; Tabari, Tafsîr, vol. x, p. 74.

<sup>2</sup> E. Glaser, Mitteilungen der vorderasiatischen Gesellschaft (Berlin, 1897), pp. 390, 401 ; cf. Corpus inscriptionum Semiticarum, pars iv, t. i, pp. 15-19.

<sup>8</sup> Rahmandn appears as title of the Christian God in a fifth-century South Arabic inscription.

<sup>4</sup> Dussaud and Macler, Voyage archéologique, p. 95, l. 10; Dussaud, Arabes, PP- 152-3-

<sup>6</sup> J. H. Mordtmann and D. H. Müller in Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, vol. x (1896), pp. 285-92.

### 3 Persia

#### 4. Ghas-sânland

destruction. Makkah itself was the abode of an Abyssinian, presumably Christian, colony. Bilal,<sup>3</sup> whose stentorian voice won him the unique distinction of becoming the Prophet's muezzin, was an Abyssinian negro. The koranic references to the sea and its tempests (surahs 16 : 14, 10 : 23-4, 24 : 40), which are characterized by unusual clarity and vividness, are an echo of the active maritime intercourse between al-Hijaz and Abyssinia. When the infant Moslem community was hard pressed by the pagan Quraysh it was to Abyssinia of all lands that they turned for refuge.<sup>4</sup>

In the century preceding the establishment of Islam, Zoroastrian Persia was contesting with Abyssinia for supremacy over al-Yaman. Knowledge of the military art of Persia was passing into Arabian possession from the south and also from the north through Persian Arabia, with its capital al-



Hirah. Tradition relates that it was Salman the Persian who taught the Prophet how to dig a trench for the defence of al-Madinah.<sup>5</sup>

Al-Hirah, the Arab satellite of Persia, was the main channel through which not only Persian cultural influences but, later, Aramaean Nestorian influences percolated into the Arabia of pre-Muhammadan days. As these Nestorians formed later the main link between Hellenism and nascent Islam, so now they acted as a medium for transmitting northern cultural ideas, Aramaic, Persian and Hellenic, into the heart of pagan Arabia.

Just such an influence as the Nestorians of al-Hirah had on the Arabs of the Persian border was exerted by the Monophysites of Ghassanland upon the people of al-Hijaz. For four centuries prior to Islam these Syrianized Arabs had been bringing the Arab world into touch not only with Syria but also with Byzantium. Such personal names as Dawud (David), Sulay-man (Solomon), Tsa (Jesus), were not uncommon among the pre-Islamic Arabians.

#### CH. VII AL-HIJÀZ ON THE EVE OF THE RISE OF ISLAM 107

This northern influence, however, should not be overestimated, for neither the Monophysite nor the Nestorian church had enough vitality to make its religious ideas contagious. The material collected by Père Cheikho<sup>1</sup> does not suffice to show that Christianity had struck deep root anywhere in North Arabia, yet it reveals many pre-Islamic poets as familiar with certain floating Christian ideas and Christian terms. A considerable number of Aramaic words passed into the ancient Arabic vocabulary.<sup>2</sup>

The monotheism affecting Arabia was not entirely of the 5. The Christian type. Jewish colonies flourished in al-Madinah

and Jews various oases of northern al-Hijâz.<sup>3</sup> Al-Jumahi (f 845) devotes a section of his biographies<sup>4</sup> to the Jewish poets of al-Madīnah and its environs. Al-Aghani cites a number of Jewish poets of Arabia. But the only supposedly Jewish poet who left us a diwan was al-Samaw'al (Samuel),<sup>5</sup> of al-Ablaq near Taymâ', a contemporary of Imru'-al-Qays. His poetry, however, has nothing to differentiate it from the current heathen type, and therefore al-Samaw'al's Judaism has been rightly suspected. In al-Yaman Judaism is supposed to have attained the dignity of a state religion under the aegis of dhu-Nuwâs.

In summing up it may be safely stated that al-Hijâz in the century preceding the mission of Muhammad was ringed about with influences, intellectual, religious and material, radiating from Byzantine, Syrian (Aramaean), Persian and Abyssinian centres and conducted mainly through Ghassânid, Lakhmid and Yamanite channels; but it cannot be asserted that al-Hijâz was in such vital contact with the higher civilization of the north as to transform its native cultural aspect. Then too, although Christianity did find a footing in Najrân, and Judaism in al-Yaman and al-Hijâz, neither seems to have left much of an impression on the North Arabian mind. Nevertheless the anti-

<sup>1</sup> Al-Najraniyah wa-Âdâbuha, 2 pts. (Beirût, 1912, 1919, 1923); Shu ara\* al-Nasrânîyah, 2. vols. (Beirût, 1890).

<sup>2</sup> Kanisah and bî'ah (church), dumyah and surah (image, picture), qissis (monk), fadaqah (alms), nâlür (watchman), nir (yoke), faddân (acre), qindil (lamp, originally Latin candela) are illustrations. Latin castrum gave Syriac qas{ra and Western Aramaic qasra from which Arabic qasr (castle, palace) came and was re-introduced into Europe in the form of Italian cassero, Spanish alcázar.

<sup>3</sup> Jibril (Gabriel), surah (revelation, chapter), jabbdar (most powerful), illustrate Hebrew words in the Arabic vocabulary.

<sup>4</sup> *Tabaqát al-Shu'ara'*, ed. J. Hell (Leyden, 1916), pp. 70-74.

\* *Diwan al-Samaw'al*, 2nd ed., ed. Cheikho (Beirut, 1920),

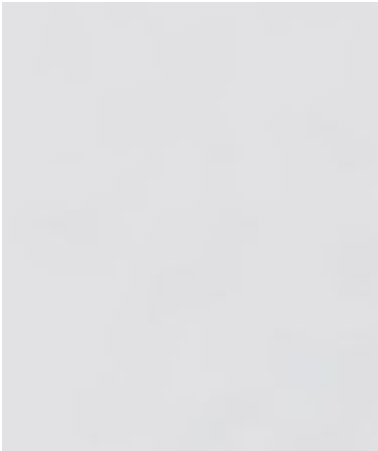
quoted paganism of the peninsula seems to have reached the point where it failed any longer to meet the spiritual demands of the people and was outgrown by a dissatisfied group who developed vague monotheistic ideas and went by the name of Hanifs.<sup>1</sup> Umayyah ibn-abi-al-Salt (f 624), through his mother a second cousin of the Prophet, and Waraqah ibn-Nawfal, a cousin of Khadijah, were such Hanifs, though several sources make Waraqah a Christian. On the political side the organized national life developed in early South Arabia was now utterly disrupted. Anarchy prevailed in the political realm as it did in the religious. The stage was set, the moment was psychological, for the rise of a great religious and national leader.

<sup>1</sup> Loan-word from Aramaic through Nabataean; N. A. Faris and H. W. Glidden, *Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society*, vol. xix (1939), pp. 1-13; cf. Arthur Jeffery, *The Foreign Vocabulary of the Quran* (Baroda, 1938), pp. 112-15. Further archaeological and linguistic research will probably confirm the importance of the influence of Nabataean culture not only on Islam but also on early Christianity.

## PART II

### THE RISE OF ISLAM AND THE

## CALIPHAL STATE



## CHAPTER VIII

### MUHAMMAD THE PROPHET OF ALLAH

In or about A.D. 571 a child was born to the Quraysh at Makkah and was given by his mother a name which may remain for ever uncertain. His tribe called him al-Amin<sup>1</sup> (the faithful), apparently an honorific title. The form which his name takes in the Koran (3 : 138, 33 : 40, 48 : 29, 47 : 2) is Muhammad<sup>2</sup> and once (61 : 6) Ahmad. In popular usage he is Muhammad (highly praised)—a name borne by more male children than any other. The baby's father, 'Abdullah, died before his birth; the mother, Aminah, when he was about six years old. It therefore fell to the lot of his grandfather, 'Abd-al-Muttalib, to bring up the boy, and after the grandfather's death the duty devolved upon his paternal uncle abu-Talib.

Quraysh

«

= •

## Qusayy

When twelve years old, it is related, Muhammad accompanied his uncle and patron abu-Talib on a caravan journey to Syria, in the course of which he met a Christian monk to whom legend has given the name Bahira.

Though the only one of the world prophets to be born within the full light of history, Muhammad is but little known to us in

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Hisham, Sir ah, p. 125; Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 18; Mas'udi, vol. iv, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> Name occurs in a South Arabic inscription, Corpus inscriptionum Semiticarum, t. ii, p. 104.

H2 RISE OF ISLAM AND THE CALIPHAL STATE PART II his early life: of his struggle for a livelihood, his efforts towards self-fulfilment and his gradual and painful realization of the great task awaiting him we have but few reliable reports. The first record of his life was undertaken by ibn-Ishaq, who died in Baghdad about A.H. 150 (767) and whose biography of the Prophet has been preserved only in the later recension of ibn-Hisham, who died in Egypt about A.H. 218 (833). Other than Arabic sources for the life of the Prophet and the early period of nascent Islam we have none. The first Byzantine chronicler to record some facts about "the ruler of the Saracens and the pseudo-prophet" was Theophanis<sup>1</sup> in the early part of the ninth century. The first reference to Muhammad in Syriac occurs in a seventh century work.<sup>2</sup>

With his marriage at the age of twenty-five to the wealthy and high-minded widow Khadijah, fifteen years his senior, Muhammad steps upon the threshold of clear history.

Khadijah was a Qurayshite and, as a well-to-do merchant's widow, was conducting business independently and had taken young Muhammad into her employ. As long as this lady with her strong personality and noble character lived, Muhammad would have none other for a wife.

The competence which now entered into the economic life of Muhammad, and to which there is a clear koranic<sup>3</sup> reference, gave him leisure and enabled him to pursue his own inclinations. He was then often noticed secluding himself and engaging in meditation within a little cave (^ghar) on a hill outside of Makkah called Hira'.<sup>4</sup> It was in the course of one of these periods of distraction caused by doubts and yearning after the truth that Muhammad heard in Ghar Hira' a voice<sup>5</sup> commanding: "Recite thou in the name of thy Lord who created", etc.<sup>6</sup> This was his first revelation. The Prophet had received his call. The night of that day was later named "the Night of Power" (Jaylat al-qadry and fixed towards the end of Ramadan (610). When after a brief interval (Jat raid), following his call to the prophetic office, the second vision came, Muhammad, under the stress of great

<sup>1</sup> Chronographa, ed. Carolus de Boor (Leipzig, 1885), p. 333.

<sup>2</sup> A. Mingana, Sources syriaques. vol. i. Bar-Penk'aye (Leipzig, 1908), p. 146 (text)

= P- 175 fir.).

<sup>3</sup> Surah 93: 6-9

<sup>4</sup> See Ibrahim Rif'at, Mtr pl al-Ilaramayn (Cairo, 1925), vol. i. pp. 56-60

<sup>5</sup> Al-Bukhari, Sahih (Bulaq, 1296), vol- i, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Koran 96 : 1-5.  
1.

Koran 97 :

emotion, rushed home in alarm and asked his wife to put some covers on him, whereupon these words “descended”: “O thou, enwrapped in thy mantle! Arise and warn”.<sup>1</sup> The voices varied and sometimes came like the “reverberating of bells” (saḥāṭ al-jarās)? but later, in the Madīnese sūrahs, became one voice, identified as that of Jibril (Gabriel).

In his call and message the Arabian Muhammad was as truly prophetic as any of the Hebrew prophets of the Old Testament. God is one. He is all-powerful. He is the creator of the universe. There is a judgment day. Splendid rewards in Paradise await those who carry out God’s commands, and terrible punishment in hell for those who disregard them. Such was the gist of his early message.

Consecrated and fired by the new task which he felt called upon to perform as the messenger (rasūl') of Allah, Muhammad now went among his own people teaching, preaching, delivering the new message. They laughed him to scorn. He turned nadhir (Koran 67 : 26; 51 : 50, 51), warner, prophet of doom, seeking to effect his purpose by vivid and thrilling description of the joys of Paradise and the terrors of hell, even threatening his hearers with imminent doom. Short, crisp, expressive and impressive were his early revelations, the Makkan sūrahs.

As glorifier of his Lord, admonisher to his people, messenger and prophet (nabi) of Allah, Muhammad was gaining few converts. Khadijah, his wife, predisposed through the influence of her Hanif<sup>3</sup> cousin Waraqah ibn-Nawfal, was the first of the few who responded to his call. Muhammad’s cousin \*Ali and his kinsman abu-Bakr followed. But abu-Sufyân, representing the aristocratic and influential

Umayyad branch of Quraysh, stood adamant. What they considered a heresy seemed to run counter to the best economic interests of the Quraysh as custodians of al-Ka'bah, the panthéon of multitudinous deities and centre of a pan-Arabian pilgrimage.

As new recruits, mainly from among the slave and lower classes, began to swell the ranks of the believers, the ridicule and sarcasm which had hitherto been used unsparingly on the part of the Quraysh were no longer deemed effective as weapons;

<sup>1</sup> Koran 74 : 1 seq.

<sup>2</sup> Bukhari, vol. i, p. 2,1. 11. Compare the call of Isaiah 6 : 1 seq. See Tor Andrae, Mohammed: sein Leben und sein Glaube (Gottingen, 1932), pp. 39 seq.

- Cf. ibn-Hishâm, pp. 121, 143.

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it became necessary to resort to active persecution. These new measures resulted in the migration to Abyssinia of eleven Makkan families followed in 615 by some eighty-three others, chief among whom was that of 'Uthman ibn-'Affan. The emigres found asylum in the domain of the Christian Negus, who was unbending in his refusal to deliver them into the hands of their oppressors.<sup>6 7</sup> Undaunted through these dark days of persecution by the temporary loss of so many followers, Muhammad fearlessly continued to preach and by persuasion convert men from the worship of the many and false gods to that of the one and true God, Allah. The revelations did not cease to “descend”. He who



had marvelled at the Jews and Christians having a “scripture” was determined that his people, too, should have one.

Soon 'Umar ibn-al-Khattab, destined to play a leading role in the establishment of the Islamic state, was enrolled in the service of Allah. About three years before the Hijrah the faithful Khadijah died, and a little later died abu-Talib, who, though he never professed Islam, stood firm to the end in defence of his brother's son, his protegee. Within this pre-Hijrah period there also falls the dramatic isra' that nocturnal journey in which the Prophet is said to have been instantly transported from al-Ka'bah to Jerusalem preliminary to his ascent (yniraf) to the seventh heaven. Since it thus served as the terrestrial station on this memorable journey, Jerusalem, already sacred to the Jews and Christians, has become and remained the third holiest city after Makkah and al-Madinah in the Moslem world. Embellished by later accretions this miraculous trip still forms a favourite theme in mystic circles in Persia and Turkey, and a Spanish scholar<sup>8</sup> considers it the original source of Dante's Divine Comedy. That the memory of al-Isra' is still a living, moving force in Islam is illustrated by the serious disturbance of August 1929, in Palestine, centring on the Wailing Wall of the Jews in Jerusalem, which the Moslems consider the halting-place of the Buráq,<sup>9</sup>

ز داز پسّم آن براق برق قنار  
ز نیکه پیکر بر آغوشی در جم و لای



ز دشت در نیم خطه باب  
ز دور کا پسّم حلقه ر در

## British Museum

MUHAMMAD'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE CELESTIAL SPHERES  
Original in Jami, Yusuf u Zulaykha, fifteenth century. British  
Museum, Or. 4535. ri6 RISE OF ISLAM AND THE CALIPHAL  
STATE PART II the winged horse with a woman's face and  
peacock's tail on which Muhammad journeyed heavenward.

About 620 some Yathribites, mainly of the Khazraj tribe, met Muhammad at the \*Ukaz fair and grew interested in what he had to say. Two years later a deputation of about seventy-five men invited him to make Yathrib (al-Madinah) his home, hoping thereby to secure a means for reconciling the hostile Aws and Khazraj. In al-Madinah the Jews, who were looking forward to a Messiah, had evidently predisposed their heathen compatriots in favour of such a claimant as Muhammad. Having paid a futile propagandist visit to al-Ta'if and believing his cause lost in his native town, Muhammad allowed two hundred followers to elude the vigilance of the Quraysh and slip quietly into al-Madinah, with which his mother had some uncertain connection ; he himself followed and arrived there on September 24, 622. Such was the famous hegira (hijrati)—not entirely a “flight” but a scheme of migration carefully considered for some two years. Seventeen years later the Caliph 'Umar designated that lunar year (beginning July 16) in which the Hijrah took place as the official starting-point of the Moslem era.<sup>1</sup>

The Hijrah, with which the Makkan period ended and the Madinese period began, proved a turning-point in the life of Muhammad. Leaving the city of his birth as a despised prophet, he entered the city of his adoption as an honoured chief. The seer in him now recedes into the background and the practical man of politics comes to the fore. The prophet is gradually overshadowed by the statesman.

Taking advantage of the periods of “holy truce” and anxious to offer sustenance to the Emigrants (muhajirun) the Madinese Moslems, now termed Ansar (Supporters), under the leadership of the new chief intercepted a summer caravan on its return from Syria to Makkah, thus striking at the most vital point in the life of that commercial metropolis. The caravan leader abu-Sufyan had got wind of the scheme and sent to Makkah for reinforcement. The encounter between the reinforcement and the Madinese, mostly Emigrants, took place at Badr, eighty-five miles south-west of al-Madinah, in Ramadan, A.D. 624, and, thanks to the inspiring leadership of the Prophet, resulted in the complete victory of three hundred Moslems over a thousand Mak-<sup>1</sup> Tabari, vol. 1, pp. 1256, 2480; Mas'udi, vol. ix, p. 53.

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kans. However unimportant in itself as a military engagement,<sup>1</sup> this Ghazwat Badr laid the foundation of Muhammad's temporal power. Islam had won its first and decisive military victory. The victory itself was interpreted as a divine sanction of the new faith.<sup>2</sup> The spirit of discipline and contempt of death manifested at this first armed encounter of Islam proved characteristic of it in all its later and greater conquests. It is true that in the following year (625) the Makkans under abu-Sufyan avenged at Uhud their defeat and even wounded the Prophet, but their triumph was not to endure. Islam recovered and passed on gradually from the defensive to the offensive, and its propagation seemed always assured. Hitherto it had been a religion within a state; in al-Madlnah, after Badr, it passed into something more than a state religion—it itself became the state. Then and there Islam came to be what the world has ever since recognized it to be—a militant polity.

In 627 the “confederates” {al-ahzab\ consisting of Makkans with Bedouin and Abyssinian mercenaries, were again measuring swords with the Madinese. Heathenism was once more arrayed against Allah. On the advice of a Persian follower, Salman,<sup>3</sup> as we are told, Muhammad had a trench<sup>4</sup> dug round al-Madinah. Disgusted with this innovation in warfare, which struck the Bedouin miscellany as the most unsportsmanlike thing they had ever seen, the besiegers withdrew at the end of a month after the loss of some twenty men on both sides.<sup>5</sup> After the siege had been raised Muhammad conducted a campaign against the Jews for “siding with the confederates”, which resulted in the killing of six hundred able-bodied men of their leading tribe, the banu-Qurayzah, and the expulsion of the rest. The Emigrants were then established on the date plantations thus made ownerless.<sup>6</sup> The banu-Qurayzah were the first but not the last body of Islam’s foes to be offered the alternative of apostasy or death. The year before, Muhammad had sent into exile the banu-al-Nadir,<sup>7</sup> another Jewish tribe of al-Madinah. The Jews of Khaybar, a strongly fortified oasis north of al-Madinah, surrendered in 628 and paid tribute.

<sup>1</sup> Al-Waqidi (f 207/822-3) devotes more than a third of his Ma.gh.dzi, pp. 11-75 to Badr and its heroes.

<sup>2</sup> Koran 3 : 119, 8 : 42-3.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Josef Horowitz in Der Islam, vol. xii (1922), pp. 178-83.

\* Ar. khandaq, from Pers, kandan (to dig) through Aramaic.

<sup>5</sup> Koran 33 : 9-25 discusses this battle.

<sup>6</sup> Koran 33 : 26-7.

' Baladhuri. Futiih. pp 17-18 = Hitti, pp. 34\*5; Waqidi, pp. 353\*6

In this MadTnese period the Arabianization, the nationalization, of Islam was effected. The new prophet broke off with both Judaism and Christianity; Friday was substituted for Sabbath, the adhan (call from the minaret) was decreed in place of trumpets and gongs, Ramadan was fixed as a month of fasting, the qiblah (the direction to be observed during the ritual prayer) was changed from Jerusalem<sup>1</sup> to Makkah, the pilgrimage to al-Ka'bah was authorized and the kissing of the Black Stone— a pre-Islamic fetish—sanctioned.

in 628 Muhammad led a band ot believers to a settlement, al-Hudaybiyah, nine miles from Makkah and exacted a pact in which Makkans and Moslems were treated on equal terms.<sup>2</sup> This treaty practically ended the war with his people, the Quraysh. Among other members of this tribe, Khalid ibn-al-Walid and 'Amr ibn-al-'As ('Asi), destined to become the two mighty swords of militant Islam, were about this time received as recruits to the great cause. Two years later, towards the end of January 630 (a.H. 8), the conquest of Makkah was complete. Entering its great sanctuary Muhammad smashed the many idols, said to have numbered three hundred and sixty, exclaiming: "Truth hath come, and falsehood hath vanished!"<sup>3</sup> The people themselves, however, were treated with special magnanimity.<sup>4</sup> Hardly a triumphal entry in ancient annals is comparable to this.

It was probably about this time<sup>5</sup> that the territory around the Ka'bah was declared by Muhammad haram (forbidden, sacred), and the passage in surah 9 : 28 was revealed which was later interpreted as prohibiting all non-Moslems from approaching it This verse was evidently intended to forbid only the polytheists from drawing nigh to

the Ka'bah at the time of the annual pilgrimage The injunction as interpreted is still effective.<sup>6</sup> No more than fifteen Christian-born Europeans have thus far succeeded in seeing the two Holy Cities and escaping with their lives. The first to leave record was Ludovico di Varthema of Bologna<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. I Kings 8 : 29-30; Dan. 6 : 10.

\* Baladhuri, pp. 35-6 = Hitti, pp. 60-61.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 40 = Hitti, p. 66; cf. Koran 17 : 83. . <sup>4</sup>  
Waqidi, p. 416.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn-Sa'd, vol. ii, pt. I, p. 99; cf. Baydawi, Anwar, vol. i, p. 383, 1. 10.

\* Muhammad Labib al-Batanuni, *al-Rihlah al-Hijaziyah* (Cairo, 1329), p. 47.

<sup>7</sup> He declared false the widely spread European legend that Muhammad's body lay suspended in the air somewhere above Makkah. See *The Travels of Ludovico di Varthema in Egypt, Syria, Arabia Deserta and Arabia Felix*, tr. J. W. Jones (Hakluyt Society, vol. xxxii, London, 1863), pp. 25 seq.

in 1503, and among the latest were an Englishman, Eldon Rutter,<sup>1</sup> and a Hungarian, Julius Germanus.<sup>2</sup> The most interesting was undoubtedly Sir Richard Burton (1853).<sup>3</sup>

In A.H. 9 Muhammad stationed a garrison at Tabuk, on the frontier of Ghassanland, and without a single engagement concluded treaties of peace with the Christian chief of Aylah (al-'Aqabah) and the Jewish tribes in the oases of Maqna, Adhruh and al-Jarba' to the south.<sup>4</sup> The native Jews and Christians were taken under the protection of the newly

arising Islamic community in consideration of a payment later called jizyah. This act set a precedent far-reaching in its consequences.

This year 9 (630-31) is called the “year of delegations” (sanat al-wufud). During it delegations flocked from near and far to offer allegiance to the prince-prophet. Tribes joined out of convenience if not conviction, and Islam contented itself with exacting a verbal profession of faith and a payment of zakah (poor tax). The large number of Bedouins who joined the new order may be surmised from a saying attributed to 'Umar, “The Bedouins are the raw material of Islam”. Tribes and districts which had sent no representatives before sent them now. They came from distant 'Uman, Hadramawt and al-Yaman. The Tayyi' sent deputies and so did the Hamdan and Kindah. Arabia, which had hitherto never bowed to the will of one man, seemed now inclined to be dominated by Muhammad and be incorporated into his new scheme. Its heathenism was yielding to a nobler faith and a higher morality.

In the tenth Moslem year Muhammad entered peacefully at the head of the annual pilgrimage into his new religious capital. Makkah. This proved his last visit and was therefore styled “the farewell pilgrimage”. Three months after his return to al-Madlnah, he unexpectedly took ill and died complaining of severe headache on June 8, 632.

To the Madinese period in the life of the Prophet belong the lengthy and more verbose surahs of the Koran which contain, in addition to the religious laws governing fasting and almsgiving and prayer, social and political ordinances dealing with marriage and divorce and the treatment of slaves, prisoners of war and enemies. On behalf of the slave, the orphan, the weak



<sup>1</sup> The Holy Cities of Arabia, 2 vols. (London, 1928). <sup>a</sup> Allah Akbar (Berlin, 1938). \* Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to el-Medinah and Meccah, 3 vols. (London, \*855—6).  
<sup>4</sup> Baladhuri, pp. 59 seq. = Hitti, pp. 92 seq. and the oppressed we find the legislation of him who was himself once a poor orphan especially benevolent.<sup>1</sup>

Even in the height of his glory Muhammad led, as in his days of obscurity\* an unpretentious life in one of those clay houses consisting, as do all old-fashioned houses of present-day Arabia and Syria, of a few rooms opening into a courtyard and accessible only therefrom. He was often seen mending his own clothes and was at all times within the reach of his people. The little he left he regarded as state property. Some for love, others for political reasons, he took about a dozen wives, among whom his favourite was <sup>c</sup>A'ishah, the young daughter of abu-Bakr. By Khadijah he had a number of children, none of whom survived him except Fâtimah, the famous spouse of <sup>c</sup>Ali. Muhammad mourned bitterly the loss of his infant son Ibrâhîm, born to him by Mary, a Christian Copt. "Serious or trivial, his daily behaviour has instituted a canon which millions observe at this day with conscious mimicry. No one regarded by any section of the human race as Perfect Man has been imitated so minutely."<sup>2</sup>

Out of the religious community of al-Madinah the later and larger state of Islam arose. This new community of Emigrants and Supporters was established on the basis of religion as the Ummat (congregation of) Allah. This was the first attempt in the history of Arabia at a social organization with religion, rather than blood, as its basis. Allah was the personification of state supremacy. His Prophet, as long as he lived, was His legitimate vicegerent and supreme ruler on

earth. As such, Muhammad, in addition to his spiritual function, exercised the same temporal authority that any chief of a state might exercise. All within this community, regardless of tribal affiliation and older loyalties, were now brethren at least in principle. These are the words of the Prophet in his noble sermon at the “farewell pilgrimage”:

O ye men! harken unto my words and take ye them to heart! Know ye that every Moslem is a brother unto every other Moslem, and that ye are now one brotherhood. It is not legitimate for any one of you, therefore, to appropriate unto himself anything that belongs to his brother unless it is willingly given him by that brother.<sup>3</sup>

Thus by one stroke the most vital bond of Arab relationship,

<sup>1</sup> Koran 2 : 172, 218-19; 4 : 40; 9 : 60; 24 : 33; 93 : 9. Consult Robert Roberts, *The Social Laws of the Qorin* (London, 1925).

<sup>2</sup> D. G. Hogarth, *Arabia* (Oxford, 1922), p. 52.

• Ibn-Hishâm, p. 969; cf. Wâqidi, pp. 433-4.

that of tribal kinship, was replaced by a new bond, that of faith; a sort of Pax Islamica was instituted for Arabia. The new community was to have no priesthood, no hierarchy, no central see. Its mosque was its public forum and military drill ground as well as its place of common worship. The leader in prayer, the imam, was also to be commander in chief of the army of the faithful, who were enjoined to protect one another against the entire world. All Arabians who remained heathen were outside the pale, almost outlaws. Islam cancelled the past. Wine (khamr, from Aramaic) and gambling—next to women the two indulgences dearest to the Arabian heart—were abolished in

one verse.<sup>[10](#)</sup> Singing, almost equally attractive, was frowned upon. This contrast between the old order and the new was vividly drawn by the apocryphal words put in the mouth of Ja'far ibn-abi-Talib, the spokesman of the Moslem emigrants to Abyssinia. Said Ja'far to the Negus:

Jahiliyah people were we, worshipping idols, feeding on dead animals [maytah]<sup>[11](#)</sup>, practising immorality, deserting our families and violating the covenant terms of mutual protection, with the strong among us devouring the weak. Such was our state until Allah sent unto us a messenger from amongst ourselves whose ancestry we know and whose veracity, fidelity and purity we recognize. He it was who summoned us to Allah in order to profess Him as one and worship Him alone, discarding whatever stones and idols we and our forbears before us worshipped in His stead. He moreover commanded us to be truthful in our talk, to render to others what is due them, to stand by our families and to refrain from doing wrong and shedding blood. He forbade committing fornication, bearing false witness, depriving the orphan of his legitimate right and speaking ill of chaste women. He enjoined on us the worship of Allah alone, associating with Him no other. He also ordered us to observe prayer, pay zakah [alms] and practise fasting.<sup>[12](#)</sup>

From al-Madinah the Islamic theocracy spread all over Arabia and later encompassed the larger part of Western Asia and North Africa. The community of al-Madinah was in miniature the subsequent community of Islam.

Within a brief span of mortal life Muhammad called forth out of unpromising material a nation never united before, in a country that was hitherto but a geographical expression; established a religion which in vast areas superseded Christianity and Judaism and still claims the adherence of a goodly portion of the human race; and laid the basis of an

empire that was soon to embrace within its far-flung boundaries the fairest provinces of the then civilized world. Himself an unschooled man,<sup>1</sup> Muhammad was nevertheless responsible for a book still considered by one-eighth of mankind as the embodiment of all science, wisdom and theology.

<sup>1</sup> Koranic ummi (3: 19), which Sunni (orthodox) Moslems interpret “illiterate”, is explained by Tabari, Tafsir, vol. iii, p. 143, as one among the Arabian polytheists, who have no revelation. Critical scholars point out that in the Koran (7 : 156; 3 : 68-9; 62 : 2) the term is used as if in opposition to *ahl al-kitab* (the people of the Book) and should therefore be taken to mean one unable to read the holy scriptures of the earlier revealed religions; surah 25 : 6 is quoted as suggesting Muhammad’s ability to write Arabic.

## CHAPTER IX

The year following the death of Muhammad, according to the orthodox view, abu-Bakr, on the recommendation of 'Umar, who had observed that the Koran memorizers were

becoming extinct, ordered that the scattered portions of the Koran be collected. Zayd ibn-Thabit of al-Madinah, formerly Muhammad’s secretary, was entrusted with the task. Fragments from “ribs of palm-leaves and tablets of white stone and from the breasts of men” <sup>13</sup> were brought together and a text was constructed. In the caliphate of 'Uthman (644-56) various readings in the current copies arose, due mainly to the defective nature of Kufic script; 'Uthman accordingly appointed in 651 the same Zayd as chairman of the committee on revision. Abu-Bakr’s copy, then in the custody of Hafsah, daughter of 'Umar and one of Muhammad’s widows, was used as a basis. The

original codex of the fresh version was kept in al-Madinah; [14](#) three copies of this text were made and forwarded to the three military camps in Damascus, al-Basrah and al-Kufah, and all others were destroyed.

The modern scholarly view, however, doubts whether abu-Bakr ever made an official recension and maintains that 'Uthman found several metropolitan codices in Arabia, Syria and al-'Iraq with divergent readings. 'Uthman canonized the Madinah codex and ordered all others destroyed. The text was finally fixed by the two vizirs ibn-Muqlah and ibn-Tsa in 933 with the help of the learned ibn-Mujahid. Ibn-Mujahid admitted seven readings, which had developed because of lack of vowel and diacritical marks, as canonical. [15](#)

The Moslem view is that the Koran is the word of Allah

dictated through Gabriel to Muhammad from an archetype preserved in the seventh heaven (sûrs. 43:3, 56:76-9, 85:21-2)? Not only is the meaning therefore inspired but every word, every letter.

The arrangement of the sûrahs (koranic chapters) is mechanical, in the order of their length. The Makkan sûrahs, about ninety in number and belonging to the period of struggle, are mostly short, incisive, fiery, impassioned in style and replete with prophetic feeling. In them the oneness of Allah, His attributes, the ethical duties of man and the coming retribution constitute the favourite themes. The Madīnese sûrahs, the remaining twenty-four (about one-third of the contents of the Koran) which "were sent down" (unzilat} in the period of victory, are mostly long, verbose and rich in legislative material. In them theological dogmas and ceremonial regulations relating to the institution of public prayer, fasting, pilgrimage and the sacred months are laid down. They moreover contain laws prohibiting wine,

pork and gambling; fiscal and military ordinances relating to alms-giving (zakâk) and holy war (Jihâd)\ civil and criminal laws regarding homicide, retaliation, theft, usury, marriage and divorce, adultery, inheritance and the freeing of slaves. Sûrahs 2, 4 and 5 contain most of this legislative material. The often-quoted prescription for marriage (sûr. 4: 3)<sup>2</sup> limit rather than introduce the practice of polygamy. Critics consider the statutes relating to divorce (4: 24, 33 :48, 2 : 229) the most objectionable, and those about the treatment of slaves, orphans and strangers (4 : 2, 3, 40; 16 : 73; 24 : 33) the most humane portions of Islamic legislation. The manumission of slaves is inculcated as something most pleasing to God and regarded as an expiation for many a sin. Flashes of the old eloquence and prophetic spark appear here and there in the Madînese sûrahs, as in sûrah 24? Among the noblest verses of the Koran are sûrah 2 : 172, 256.

Almost all the historical narratives of the Koran have their biblical parallels with the exception of a few purely Arabian stories relating to \*Ad and Thamûd, Luqmân, the “owners of the elephant”, and two others alluding to Alexander the Great {Iskandar dhu-al-Qarnayrij\* and to the “Seven Sleepers”—all

<sup>1</sup> Consult Baydâwi, vol. ii, pp. 235, 309-10, 396.                      <sup>2</sup> Cf. sûr. 70 : 29-30.

- The verses in this sûrah dealing with light betray Zoroastrian influence.

\* Sûr. 18 : 82 seq., where he seems to be invested with a divine commission. Dan. 8 : 5, 21, has a clear reference to Alexander.

of which receive but very brief mention. Among the Old Testament characters, Adam, Noah, Abraham<sup>1</sup> (mentioned about seventy times in twenty-five different sūrahs and having his name as a title for sūrah 14), Ishmael, Lot, Joseph (to whom sūrah 12 is dedicated), Moses (whose name occurs in thirty-four different sūrahs), Saul, David, Solomon, Elijah, Job and Jonah (whose name sūrah 10 bears) figure prominently. The story of the creation and fall of Adam is cited five times, the flood eight and Sodom eight. In fact the Koran shows more parallelism to the Pentateuch than to any other part of the Bible.

All these narratives are used didactically, not for the object of telling a story but to preach a moral, to teach that God in former times has always rewarded the righteous and punished the wicked. The story of Joseph is told in a most interesting and realistic way. The variations in this and in such other instances as the story of Abraham's response to the call of the one true God (sūr. 21 : 52 seqf) have their parallels in the midrash, Talmud and other non-canonical Jewish works.<sup>2</sup>

Of the New Testament characters Zachariah, John the Baptist, Jesus ('Isa) and Mary are the only ones emphasized. The last two names are generally associated. Mary the mother of Jesus is also the daughter of 'Imran and a sister of Aaron.<sup>5</sup> Haman (Haman), the favourite of Ahasuerus,<sup>4</sup> is himself the minister of Pharaoh.<sup>6</sup> It is worthy of note that the Arabic forms of the names of the Old Testament characters seem to have come mainly through Syriac (e.g. Nūh, Noah) and Greek (e.g. Ilyas, Elias; Yūnus, Jonah) rather than directly from Hebrew.

A comparative study of the above koranic and biblical narratives and such parallel passages as those that follow reveals no verbal dependence: sūr. 2 : 44-58 and Acts 7 : 36-

53; sūr. 2 : 273 and Matt. 6 : 3, 4; sūr. 10 : 72 and 2 Pet. 2 : 5; sürs. 10 : 73, 24 : 50 and Deut. 26 : 14, 17; sūr. 17 : 23-40 and Ex. 20 : 2-17, Deut. 5 : 6-21; sūr. 21 : 20 and Rev. 4 : 8; sūr. 23 : 3 and Matt.

<sup>1</sup> In the Madinese sūrahs Abraham becomes a Hanif, a Moslem (sūr. 3 : 60). He is held as Muhammad's ideal predecessor, the spiritual ancestor of Islam (sürs. 4 : 124; 3 : 61) and the founder of al-Ka'bah (2 : 118 seq.}. As the "friend" of God he is cited in the Old Testament (Is. 41 : 8, 2 Ch. 20 : 7), the New Testament (Jas. 2 : 23) and the Koran (4 : 124).

<sup>2</sup> Consult The Legacy of Israel, ed. E. R. Bevan and C. Singer (Oxford, 1928)

pp. 129-71.

<sup>8</sup> Sürs. 19 : 16-29; 3 ■ S<sup>1</sup> ^ 0\_ : 1.

<sup>4</sup> Esther 3

<sup>5</sup> Sürs. 28 : 38; 40 : 38.

6:7; sūr. 36 : 53 and I Th. 4 : 16; sūr. 39 : 30 and Matt. 6 : 24; sūr. 42 : 19 and Gal. 6 : 7-9; sūr. 48 : 29 and Mk. 4 : 28; and sūr. 92 : 18 and Lk. 11 : 41. The only quotation is sūr. 21 : 105 (cf. Ps. 37 : 9) where the Koran cites the Psalms as the source. Others which bear striking resemblance are sūr. 21 : 104 and Is. 34 : 4; sūr. 53 : 39-42 and Ezek. 18 : 20; sūr. 53 : 45 and 1 Sam. 2 : 6; and sūr. 53 : 49 and 1 Sam. 2 : 7. Such verses as those dealing with an "eye for an eye" (sūr. 5 : 49 and Ex. 21:23-7), the "camel and the needle" (sūr. 7: 38 and Matt. 19:24), the "house built upon the sand" (sūr. 9:110 and Matt. 7 : 24-7) and the "taste of death for every man" (sürs. 21 : 36, 29: 57, 3 : 182 and Heb. 9 : 27, 2 : 9, Matt. 16 : 28) evidently represent old Semitic proverbs and



sayings common to both Hebrew and Arabic. The parallels between Matthew and the Makkan sûrahs seem particularly copious. Certain miraculous acts attributed to Jesus the child, such as speaking in the cradle (sür. 3 : 41) and creating birds out of clay (sür. 3 : 43), recall similar acts recorded in the Apocryphal Gospels, including the Injil al-Tufûliyah. The only conspicuous parallel with any of the contents of the sacred books of Persia occurs in the picture of heaven and hell, sketched with a brush dipped in materialistic colours (sür. 56 : 8-56), which has a counterpart in the late writings of the Parsis. The picture itself may have been inspired by Christian miniatures or mosaics representing the gardens of Paradise with figures of angels which were interpreted as being those of young men and young women.

Though the youngest of the epoch-making books, the Koran is the most widely read book ever written, for besides its use in worship, it is the text-book from which practically every Moslem learns to read Arabic. Other than the official translation into Turkish no authorized Moslem translation into a foreign language exists; but there are unauthorized interlinear free translations by Moslems into Several languages, including Persian, Bengali, Urdu, Marathi, Javanese and Chinese. In all, the Koran has been done into some forty languages.<sup>1</sup> The words (77,934), the

<sup>1</sup> The first translation into a foreign language was that into Latin sponsored (1143) by Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny, who secured the services of three Christian scholars and an Arab, in an attempt to refute the beliefs of Islam. In English the first translation appeared in 1649 (London), "The Alcoran of Mahomet, translated out of Arabique into French; by the Sieur Du Ryer. . . . And newly Englished, for the satisfaction of all that desire to look into the Turkish vanities". Sale's translation (1734) from the original Arabic

is a paraphrase influenced by the verses (6236) and even the letters (323,621) <sup>1</sup> have been painstakingly counted. This unbounded reverence for The Book reached its climax in the later dogma that it is “the uncreated word” of God, an echo of the “Logos” theory.<sup>2</sup> “Let none touch it but the purified.” <sup>3</sup> In our own day the sight of a Moslem picking up a piece of paper from the street and tucking it carefully into a hole in a wall—lest the name of Allah be on it—is not rare.

The word Qur'an itself means recitation, lecture, discourse. This book, a strong, living voice, is meant for oral recitation and should be heard in the original to be appreciated. No small measure of its force lies in its rhyme and rhetoric and in the cadence and sweep, which cannot be reproduced in translation without loss. Its length is four-fifths of that of the Arabic New Testament. The religious influence it exercises as the basis of Islam and the final authority in matters spiritual and ethical is only one side of the story. Theology, jurisprudence and science being considered by Moslems as different aspects of one and the same thing, the Koran becomes the scientific manual, the textbook, for acquiring a liberal education. In such a school as al-Azhar, the largest Moslem university in the world, this book still holds its own as the basis of the whole curriculum. Its literary influence may be appreciated when we realize that it was due to it alone that the various dialects of the Arabic-speaking peoples have not fallen apart into distinct languages, as have the Romance languages. While today an 'Iraqi may find it a little difficult fully to understand the speech of a Moroccan, yet he would have no difficulty in understanding his written language, since in both al-Iraq and Morocco—as well as in Syria, Arabia, Egypt—the classical language modelled by the Koran is followed closely everywhere. At the time of Muhammad there was no work of the first order in

Arabic prose. The Koran was therefore the earliest, and has ever since remained the model, prose work. Its language is rhythmical and rhetorical, but not poetical. Its rhymed prose has set the standard which almost every conservative Arabic writer of today consciously strives to imitate.

Latin version of Marracci's *Refutatio Alcorani* (1698); Rodwell's (1861) arranges the surahs chronologically; Palmer's (1880) tries to reproduce the Oriental flavour; Marmaduke Pickthall's (1930) is especially successful. Richard Bell (1937-9) attempts a critical rearrangement of the verses. The earliest Arabic printing of the Koran was done between 1485 and 1499 in Venice by Alessandro de Paganini.

<sup>1</sup> I here are other enumerations. <sup>1</sup> Cf. John I: I; Prov. 22-30. <sup>8</sup> Sur. 56: 78.8:

## CHAPTER X

### ISLAM THE RELIGION OF SUBMISSION TO THE WILL OF ALLAH

Of the three monotheistic religions developed by the Semites, the Islam of the Koran is the most characteristic and comes nearer the Judaism of the Old Testament than does the Christianity of the New Testament. It has such close affinities with both, however, that in the conception of many medieval European and Oriental Christians it stood as a heretic Christian sect rather than a distinct religion. In his *Divine Comedy* Dante consigns Muhammad to one of the lower hells with all those "sowers of scandals and schism". Gradually Islam developed into an independent and distinct system of belief. The Ka'bah and Quraysh were the determining factors in this new orientation.

In dealing with the fundamentals of their religion Moslem theologians distinguish between *imân* (religious belief), *'ibâdât* (acts of worship, religious duty) and *ihsân* (right-doing), all of which are included in the term *din* (religion).<sup>1</sup> "Verily the religion [din] with God is Islam."<sup>2</sup>

## Dogmas and beliefs

Iman involves belief in God and in His angels, His "books" and His messengers and in the last day. Its first and greatest dogma is: *la ilâha illa-l-Lâh*, no god whatsoever but Allah. In *imân* the conception of God stands supreme. In fact, over ninety per cent, of Moslem theology has to do with Allah. He is the one true God. The profession of His unity receives its most poignant expression in surah 112. God is the supreme reality, the preexistent, the creator (*sûrs.* 16 : 3-17; 2 : 27-8), the omniscient, omnipotent (13 : 9-17; 6 : 59-62; 2 : 100-101; 3 : 25-7), the selfsubsistent (2 : 256; 3:1). He has ninety-nine excellent names (*al-asma al-husna*? stir. 7 : 179) and as many attributes. The full Moslem rosary has ninety-nine beads corresponding to His

<sup>1</sup> Cf. al-Shahrastâni, *al-Milal w-al-Nihal*, ed. Cureton (London, 1842-6), p. 27. ■ Koran 3:17.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Ghazzâli, *al-Maqâd al-Asna*, 2nd ed. (Cairo, 1324), pp. 12 seq.\ Baghawî, *idaçâbih*, vol. i, pp. 96-7.

ch. x ISLAM THE RELIGION OF SUBMISSION TO ALLAH 129 names. His attributes (*sifât'*) of love are overshadowed by those of might and majesty (*sür.* 59: 23-4). Islam (*sûrs.* 5 : 5 , 6 : 125, 49 : 14) is the religion of "submission", "surrender", to the will of Allah. The submission of Abraham and his son in the supreme test, the attempted sacrifice by the father, expressed in the verb *aslamâ* (sur. 37 : 103), was evidently the act that provided Muhammad with the name

for the new faith.<sup>1</sup> In this uncompromising monotheism, with its simple, enthusiastic faith in the supreme rule of a transcendent being, lies the chief strength of Islam. Its adherents enjoy a consciousness of contentment and resignation unknown among followers of most creeds. Suicide is rare in Moslem lands.

The second dogma in ĩmân treats of Muhammad as the messenger (rasUf) of Allah (surs. : 157; 48 : 29), His prophet (7 : 156, 158), the admonisher (35 : 22) of his people, the last of a long line of prophets of whom he is the “seal” (33 : 40), and therefore the greatest. In the koranic system of theology Muhammad is but a human being whose only miracle is the ijâz of the Koran;<sup>2</sup> but in tradition, folklore and popular belief he is invested with a divine aura. His religion is pre-eminently a practical one, reflecting the practical and efficient mind of its originator. It offers no unattainable ideal, few theological complications and perplexities, no mystical sacraments and no priestly hierarchy involving ordination, consecration and “apostolic succession”.

The Koran is the word (kalâm, sûrs. 9 : 6; 48 : 15, cf. 6 : 114-15) of Allah. It contains the final revelation (surs. 17 : 107-8; 97 : 1; 44 : 2; 28 : 51; 46 : 11) and is “uncreated”. A koranic quotation is always introduced with “saith Allah”. In its phonetic and graphic reproduction and in its linguistic form the Koran is identical and co-eternal with a heavenly archetype (sûrs. 56 : 76-9; 85 : 21-2). Of all miracles it is the greatest: all men and jinn in collaboration could not produce its like (17 : 90).

In its angelology Islam gives the foremost place to Gabriel (Jibril), the bearer of revelation (2 : 91),<sup>3</sup> who is also “the spirit

<sup>1</sup> C. C. Torrey, *The Jewish Foundation of Islam* (New York, 1933), pp. 90, 102 seq.

<sup>2</sup> The elegance of its composition, which constitutes its miraculous character; Koran 13 : 27-30; 17 : 87-96. See ibn-Hazm, *al-Fast fi al-Milal w-al-Ahwa w-al-Nihal*, vol. iii (Cairo, 1347), pp. 10-14; al-Suyüti, *al-Itqân fi ' Ulüm al-Qur'ân* (Cairo, 1925), vol. ii, pp. 116-25.

' This sûrah contains the only distinct assertion of Gabriel's being the medium of revelation; cf. surs. 81 : 19-20; 53 : 5-7.

of holiness" (16 : 104; 2 : 81) and "the faithful spirit" (26: 193). As a messenger of the supreme deity he corresponds to the Hermes of Greek mythology.

Sin can be either moral or ceremonial. The worst and only unpardonable sin is shirk, joining or associating of other gods with the one true God (4:51, 116). Ascribing plurality to the Deity seemed most detestable to Muhammad, and in the Madinese surahs the polytheists are continually threatened with the last judgment (28 : 62 seq., 21 -.98 seq). In Muhammad's mind "the people of the book", the Scripturaries,<sup>1</sup> i.e. the Christians and Jews, were probably not included among the polytheists, though some commentators on sur. 98 : 5 would hold a different view.

The most impressive parts of the Koran deal with eschatology. One whole surah (75) is entitled The Resurrection {*al-qiyama*}. The reality of future life is emphasized by the recurrent references to "the day of judgment" (15 : 35-6; 82 : 17-18), "the day of resurrection" (22 : 5; 30: 56), "the day" (24: 24-5; 31 : 32), "the hour" (15 : 85; 18 : 20) and "the indubitable" (69:1-2). Future life as

depicted in the Koran, with its bodily pains and physical pleasures, implies the resurrection of the body.

The five pillars: i. Profession of faith

The religious duties (<sup>^</sup>ibadat) of the Moslem centre on the so-called five pillars (arkanj of Islam).

The profession of faith (shahadat), the first pillar, is summed up in the Koranic double formula la ilaha illa-l-Ldh; Muhammadun rasulu-l-Ldh (no god whatsoever but Allah; Muhammad is the messenger of Allah). These are the first words to strike the ear of the new-born Moslem babe; they are the last to be uttered at the grave. Between these two episodes no other words are more often repeated. They also occur in the muezzin's call to prayer chanted many times daily from the tops of minarets. Islam has generally satisfied itself with a verbal profession; once the formula is accepted and reproduced the person is nominally a Moslem.

## 2. Prayer

Five times a day<sup>2</sup> is the faithful Moslem supposed to turn his face towards Makkah and recite his prescribed prayer. Prayer is the second pillar of faith. A bird's-eye view of the Moslem world at the hour of prayer (ignoring the difference caused by longitude and latitude) would present the spectacle of a series of concentric

<sup>1</sup> H. Lammens, *Islam-, croyances et institutions* (Beirut, 1926), p. 62, l. 17, and p. 219, l. 7.      <sup>2</sup> Dawn, midday, mid-afternoon, sunset and nightfall.

and covering an ever-widening area from Sierra Leone to Malaysia and from Tobolsk to Capetown.

The word for ritual prayer, salah, is an Aramaic loan-word, as its Arabic orthography (with a waw) suggests. If prayer existed before Islam it must have been unorganized and informal. Though it is encouraged in an early surah (87 : 15) and its requirements are set forth in certain Makkan revelations (11 : 116; 17 : 80-81; 30 : 16-17), ritual prayer, with its prescribed number of five separate and distinct orisons per day and the prerequisite state of legal purity or ceremonial cleanliness (2 : 239, 24 : 57,<sup>16</sup> 4 : 46, 5 : 8-9), was not instituted until the Madinese period. The middle prayer (2 : 239) was the last enjoined. The number five, according to al-Bukhari,<sup>17</sup> was a compromise reached after Allah had asked for fifty on the occasion of Muhammad's visit to the seventh heaven on his nocturnal journey (sur. 17 : 1). Sur. 4 : 46 seems to suggest that the limitation and later interdiction of the use of wine may have owed its origin to the necessity of keeping the divine service free from undue disturbance.

The ritual prayer is a legally defined act performed by all with the same general bodily postures and genuflections and with the same proper orientation. The worshipper should be in a state of legal purity (Jaharahj, and the use of Arabic as a medium of expression is absolutely incumbent upon him, no matter what his native tongue may be. In its stereotyped form prayer is not so much petition or supplication<sup>18</sup> as it is the mention of Allah's name (62 : 9-10; 8 : 47). The simple and meaningful fatihah, often likened to the Lord's Prayer, is reiterated by the faithful Moslem about twenty times a day. This makes it one of the most often repeated formulas ever devised. Doubly meritorious is the voluntary ritual prayer performed at night



{tahajjud, 17 : 81; 50 : 38-9), for it is a work of supererogation {nafila}.

The Friday noon prayer is the only public one (62 : 9; 5 : 63) and is obligatory for all adult males. Certain mosques have places reserved for women. One feature of the Friday service is the khutbah (address) delivered by the leader (imam}, in which intercessory prayer is offered on behalf of the ruling head of the state. This congregational assembly had for its prototype the Jewish synagogue worship, but was influenced in its later development by the Christian Sunday service. In dignity, simplicity and orderliness it is unsurpassed as a manner of collective worship. Standing erect in self-arranged rows in the mosque and following the leadership of the imam with precision and reverence, the worshippers present a sight that is always impressive. As a disciplinary measure this congregational prayer must have had great value for the proud, individualistic sons of the desert. It developed in them the sense of social equality and the consciousness of solidarity. It promoted that brotherhood of community of believers which the religion of Muhammad had theoretically substituted for blood relationship. The prayer ground thus became “the first drill ground of Islam”.

### 3. Almsgiving

Prescribed originally as a voluntary act of love and considered almost identical with piety, zakah (legal alms, surs. 2 : 40, 77, 192, 263-9, 273-5, <sup>2</sup>S°) evolved into an obligatory tax on property, including money, cattle, corn, fruit and merchandise. In the Koran (9 : 5; 2 : 40, 77, etc.) zakah is often associated with the salah. The young Islamic state collected zakah through regular officials and administered it from a central treasury to support the poor among the community, build mosques and defray government expenses (sur. 9 : 60). The word zakah is

of Aramaic origin and is more specific than sadaqah, which is voluntary and implies alms-giving in general. Zakah is a purely denominational institution, involving alms raised and distributed among Moslems alone. Its underlying principle tallies with the tithe, which, according to Pliny,<sup>1</sup> the South Arabian merchants had to pay to their god before they were allowed to sell their spices. Its exact amount varied and has been determined in the various cases by the fiqh (religious law), but generally it averaged two and a half per cent. Even soldiers' pensions were not exempt. Later, with the disintegration of the purely Islamic state, zakah was again left to the Moslem's conscience. Zakah constitutes the third pillar of the faith.

#### 4 Fasting

Though penitential fasts are prescribed a number of times in the Madinese surahs (58 : 5; 19 • 27; 4 : 94; 2 : 192), Ramadan as a fasting month is mentioned only once (2 : 179-81). That particular month, which may have been sacred in pre-Islamic days, was chosen because in it the Koran was first revealed <sup>1</sup> Bk. XII, ch. 32.

ch. x ISLAM THE RELIGION OF SUBMISSION TO ALLAH 133 (sur. 2 : 181) and the victory of Badr won. Abstinence from all food and drink is enjoined from dawn till sunset (sur. 2 : 183). Instances in which violence has been used in modern times by the government or by the populace against a non-fasting believer in Moslem lands are not unknown.

We have no evidence of any practice of fasting in pre-Islamic pagan Arabia, but the institution was, of course, well established among both Christians and Jews (Matt. 4 : 2; Deut. 9 : 9). Ibn-Hisham <sup>1</sup> states that the Quraysh in the Jahillyah days were wont to spend one month a year on Mt. Hira' practising penance {tahannutji). In al-Madinah and

before instituting Ramadan, Muhammad evidently observed the tenth of Muharram {jashura) as a fast day; this he had adopted from the Jews.<sup>2</sup> In the Makkan surahs the word for fasting {sawm) occurs only once (19 : 27), and there apparently in the sense of "silence".

Pilgrimage {hajj, surs. 3 : 91; 2 : 192-6; 5 : 1-2, 96) is the fifth and last pillar of Islam. Once in a lifetime every Moslem of either sex who can afford it is supposed to undertake at a stated time of the year a holy visit to Makkah. ' Umrah is the lesser pilgrimage to Makkah and may be made individually and at any time.

#### s. Pilgrimage

The pilgrim {hajj'} makes his entry into the holy precincts as a muhrim (wearing a seamless garment) and performs the sevenfold circumambulation of the Ka'bah {tawaf) and the seven-fold course {say) between the adjacent al-Safa mound and the Marwah eminence lying opposite.<sup>3</sup> The hajj proper begins with the march to <sup>e</sup>Arafah,<sup>4</sup> which lasts from the seventh to the eighth of dhu-al-Hijjah. The halts {wuquj) take place at the outlying sanctuaries of <sup>e</sup>Arafah, namely, al-Muzdalifah and Mina. The stone-throwing ceremony takes place on the way to the valley of Mina at Jamrat al-'Aqabah. With the sacrifice at Mina of a camel or of a sheep or other horned domestic animal (Koran 22 : 34-7), which always takes place on the tenth of dhu-al-Hijjah and is celebrated throughout the Moslem world as Td al-Adha (the festival of sacrifice), the whole ceremony

<sup>1</sup> Sirah, pp. 151-2.  
16 : 29.

\* Bukhari, vol. ii, p. 208; Lev.

\* Moslems, according to their tradition, perform the say in commemoration of the fact that Hagar ran back and forth

seven times between these two eminences looking for a spring for her thirsty son.

<sup>4</sup> 'Arafah is the valley and 'Arafat the mountain, according to Rif'at, Ahrat, vol. i, p. 44, but the two words are often used interchangeably.

formally ends. After the shaving of the head the garment (ihram) is discarded and the ihlal (secular condition) resumed. As long as he is muhrim, in a sanctified state, the pilgrim must observe, in addition to the abstinences imposed in connection with the fasting of Ramadan, such as sexual intercourse, those special regulations forbidding the shedding of blood, hunting and the uprooting of plants. Fasting, however, is not required.

Pilgrimage to holy places was an ancient Semitic institution.<sup>1</sup> Echoes of it survived to Old Testament days (Ex. 23 : 14, 17; 34 : 22-3; 1 Sam. 1 : 3). Originally it may have been a feature of solar cult, the ceremonies of which coincided with the autumnal equinox and constituted a kind of farewell to the harsh rule of the burning sun and a welcoming to Quzah, the thunder-god of fertility. In pre-Islamic days the annual fairs of North Arabia were followed by a pilgrimage in dhu-al-Hijjah to the Ka'bah and 'Arafah. In the seventh year of the Hijrah Muhammad adopted and Islamized the ancient pilgrim rites centring on the Ka'bah and 'Arafah. In these rites Islam entered upon its largest share of heritage from pre-Islamic Arabia. Rif'at<sup>2</sup> relates that when a Bedouin nowadays makes his ritual walk round the Ka'bah he repeats in colloquial Arabic: "O Lord of this House! I testify that I have come. Say not that I have not come. Forgive me and forgive my father, if you will. Otherwise forgive me in spite of your unwillingness, for I have performed my pilgrimage, as you see."<sup>3</sup>

A constant trek of pilgrims across Central Africa, from Senegal, Liberia, Nigeria, is ever on the move eastward and increasing in numbers as it goes along. Some are on foot, others on camel-back. The majority are men, but a few are women and children. They trade, they beg, they work their way into the Highly Honoured Makkah (al-Mukarramah) and the Greatly Illuminated City (al-Madlnah al-Munawwarah). Many fall by the wayside and, are martyrs; those who survive finally strike

<sup>1</sup> W. Robertson Smith, Lectures on the Religion of the Semites, 3rd ed. by S. A. Cook (London, 1927), pp. 80, 276.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. i, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> The same authority (vol. i, p. 35) overheard a Bedouin woman addressing herself to al-Ka'bah thus: "O Lady Laylah! if you bring rain to our region so that plenty \khayr\ may follow, I shall fetch you a bottle of ghee so that you may anoint your hair". Hearing this another Bedouin woman asked the speaker, "Do you really mean to fetch her one as you say?" to which the former replied, "Hush, I am fooling her. Once she brings the rain I shall fetch nothing!"

a western Red Sea port whence they are transported across by dhows. But the four major caravans are those from al-Yaman, al-Traq, Syria and Egypt. Each of these countries used to send annually at the head of its caravan a mahmil symbolic of its dignity. The Mahmil, a splendidly decorated litter, is carried on a camel that is led and not ridden. Beginning with the thir-

From Ibrahim Rif'at, "Mir'at al-Haramayn"

## THE EGYPTIAN AND SYRIAN MAHMILS ON THEIR DEPARTURE FROM AL-MUZDALIFAH TO MINA, 1904

teenth century such Mahmils were sent by Moslem princes anxious to display their independence and assert their claim as protectors of the Holy Places. Current tradition holds that Shajar-al-Durr, wife of one of the last Ayyubid sultans, originated the idea of Mahmil in the middle of the thirteenth century. But in several early works<sup>1</sup> the claim is made that the Umayyad viceroy in al-Traq, the famous al-Hajjaj (f 714), was the one who initiated the practice. Whichever of the two stories be correct it was quite

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Qutaybah, Maarif, p. 274; Yaqut, Buldan, vol. iv, p. 886, l. 6; ibn Rustah, p. 192; al-Suyufi, al-Kanz al-MadJun (Bulaq, 1288), p. 68.

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evidently the Mamluk Baybars (1260 77) who celebrated the occasion with such special festivities that the custom was established on a firm basis.<sup>19</sup> In recent years the Syrian and Egyptian caravans had been distinguished in splendour. The average number of pilgrims annually between the first and second World Wars had been about 172,000. Since then it has been on the increase, reaching in the mid-1960s the million mark with Egypt and Pakistan sending the largest numbers. Puritanical ibn-Su'ud abolished the Mahmil, a relic of heathenism. In the pilgrim age Hijaz had its main source of income until the discovery of oil.

Down through the ages this institution has continued to serve as the major unifying influence in Islam and the most effective common bond among the diverse believers. It rendered almost every capable Moslem perforce a traveller

for once in his lifetime. The socializing influence of such a gathering of the brotherhood of believers from the four quarters of the earth is hard to over-estimate. It afforded opportunity for negroes, Berbers, Chinese, Persians, Syrians, Turks, Arabs—rich and poor, high and low—to fraternize and meet together on the common ground of faith. Of all world religions Islam seems to have attained the largest measure of success in demolishing the barriers of race, colour and nationality—at least within the confines of its own community. The line is drawn only between believers and the rest of mankind. These hajj gatherings have undoubtedly contributed their share towards the achievement of that result. They have further provided excellent opportunities for the propagation of sectarian ideas among peoples coming from lands not bound together by the modern means of communication and where the voice of the press is not yet a living voice. Such a movement as the Sanusi in northern Africa owes its inception and early propagation to the intercourse provided by the pilgrimage to Makkah.

Holy war The duty of jihad, holy war<sup>20</sup>(sur. 2 : 186-90), has been raised to the dignity of, a sixth pillar by at least one Moslem sect, the Kharijites. To it Islam owes its unparalleled expansion as a worldly power. It is one of the principal duties of the caliph to

From Ibrâhîm Rifat, "Mirât al-Haramayn"

PILGRIMS AROUND THE KA'BAH PERFORMING THE FRIDAY  
PRAYER, 1908

From Ibrâhîm Rifat, "Mirât Hal-aramayii'

## NORTH-EASTERN VIEW OF THE KA'BAIL, 1908

keep pushing back the geographical wall separating the dâr al-Islâm (the land of Islam) from the dâr al-harb (the war territory). This bipartite division of the world into an abode of peace and an abode of war finds a parallel in the communistic theory of Soviet Russia. Of more recent years, however, jihad has found less support in the Moslem world, chiefly because of the fragmentation and lingering of many parts under the control of various alien governments considered too strong or too benevolent to be overthrown. The last such call to a universal uprising against non-Moslems, made as late as the autumn of 1914 by the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph Muhammad Rashâd, proved an utter failure.

Another important article of faith is the belief in the divine decree of good and evil (sûr. 9:51; 3 : 139; 35:2), a dominant factor in Moslem thought and conduct throughout the ages.

The religious obligations (jibâdâf) discussed above constitute the fundamentals of Islam. But they are not the only ones instituted by koranic prescription. Right-doing (ihsân) has the same authority behind it. The sanctions of private as well as public morality in the Moslem world are all of a religious character. Basically the will of Allah, as revealed through Muhammad, determines what is right (halal — permitted, legitimate) and what is wrong (haram = forbidden). In the historical evolution of religion in Arabia, Islam was the first to demand personal belief and personal morality (sûrs. 53 : 39-42, 31 : 32). In the realm of ethical conduct it substituted the moral fellowship of religion for the tribal fellowship of blood kinship. Of the human virtues it



insists on beneficence, in the form of zakâh, most urgently. In such passages as 2 : 172; 3 : 100, 106, 109-11; 4 : 40; 7 : 31, which stand in favourable comparison with the best in the Old Testament (e.g. Amos 5 : 23-4; Hos. 6 : 6; Mic. 6 : 6-8), its ethical ideals are clearly set forth.

## CHAPTER XI

### PERIOD OF CONQUEST, EXPANSION AND COLONIZATION

A.D. 633-61

#### Orthodox Caliphs

##### 1. Abu-Bakr

- 632-34
- 634-44

. 644-56

. 656-61

##### 2. 'Umar .

##### 3. 'Uthman

##### 4. \*Ali .

As long as Muhammad lived he performed the functions of prophet, lawgiver, religious leader, chief judge, commander of the army and civil head of the state—all in one. But now Muhammad was dead. Who was to be his successor, his k hallfah (caliph), in all except the spiritual function? In his role as the last and greatest prophet, who had delivered the final dispensation to mankind, Muhammad evidently could have no one to succeed him.

The Prophet left no male children. Only one daughter, Fatimah, the wife of \*Ali, survived him. But the Arabian chieftdom or sheikhdome was not exactly hereditary; it was more electoral, following the line of tribal seniority. So even if his sons had not predeceased him, the problem would not have been solved. Nor did Muhammad clearly designate a successor. The caliphate is therefore the first problem Islam had to face. It is still a living issue. In March 1924, sixteen months after cancelling the sultanate, the Kemalist Turks abolished the Ottoman caliphate in Constantinople held by \*Abd-al-Majid II, and since then a number of pan-Islamic congresses have met in Cairo and Makkah to determine the rightful successor to the Prophet, but all to no avail. In the words of the distinguished historian of religions, al-Shahrastani (j\* 1153):<sup>1</sup> "Never was there an Islamic issue which brought about more bloodshed than the caliphate [imamah]".

As always happens when a serious question is thrown open for popular decision, a number of conflicting parties arose

<sup>1</sup> P. 12.

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subsequent to the death of Muhammad. These were on one side the Emigrants (jnuhdjiriiri), who based their claim on having belonged to the tribe of the Prophet and on having been the first to accept his mission. On the other stood the Madinese Supporters (A nsar), who asserted that had they not given Muham-mad and nascent Islam asylum both would have perished. Later these two parties coalesced to form the Companions {sahabah}. Then came the Legitimists (ashab al-nass w-al-tayin), who reasoned that Allah and Muhammad could not have left the community of believers to the chances and whims of an electorate, and therefore must

have made clear provision for its leadership by designating some particular person to succeed Muhammad. <sup>e</sup>Ali, the paternal cousin of the Prophet, the husband of his only surviving daughter and one of the first two or three believers, was the one thus designated and the only legitimate successor. As against the elective principle, this last party held to the divine right of rule. And last but not least came the aristocracy of Quraysh, the Umayyads, who held the reins of authority, power and wealth in the pre-Islamic days (but who were the last to profess Islam) and who later asserted their right to the successorship. It was abu-Sufyan, their head, who had led the opposition to the Prophet until the fall of Makkah.

The orthodox caliphate: A patriarchal age

The first party triumphed. The aged and pious abu-Bakr, a father-in-law of the Prophet and one of the first three or four to believe in him, received the oath of allegiance {bay ah) from the assembled chiefs, probably in accordance with a previously arranged scheme between himself, 'Umar ibn-al-Khattab and abu-'Ubaydah ibn-al-Jarrah—the triumvirate who presided over the destinies of infant Islam.

Abu-Bakr headed the list of the four orthodox (rashiduri) caliphs, including 'Umar, 'Uthman and <sup>c</sup>Ali. This was a period in which the lustre of the Prophet's life had not ceased to shed its light and influence over the thoughts and acts of the caliphs. All four were close associates and relatives of the Prophet. They lived in al-Madinah, the scene of his last ministry, with the exception of the last, \*Ali, who chose al-Kufah in al-Traq for his capital.

Arabia conquers itself

The short caliphate of abu-Bakr (632-4) was mostly occupied with the so-called riddah (secession, apostasy) wars. As represented by Arab chroniclers all Arabia outside of al-Hijaz, which

141 is alleged to have accepted Islam and acknowledged the temporal authority of the Prophet, upon his death broke off from the newly organized state and followed a number of local and false prophets. The fact is that with the lack of communication, the utter absence of organized methods of missionary activity and the short time involved, not more than one-third of the peninsula could actually have professed Islam during the life of the Prophet or recognized his rule. Even al-Hijaz, the immediate scene of his activity, was not Islamized until a year or two before his death. The delegates {wuficd) reported to have come to pay him homage could not have represented all Arabia, and for a tribe to become Moslem in those days simply meant that its chiefs so became.

Many such tribes in al-Yaman, al-Yamamah and 'Uman felt reluctant to pay the zakah to al-Madinah. The death of the Prophet provided the excuse for active refusal. Jealousy against the rising hegemony of the Hijaz capital was one of the underlying motives. The old centrifugal forces characteristic of Arabian life were once more in full operation.

Abu-Bakr, however, was adamant in his insistence on unconditional surrender from "the seceders" or war unto destruction.<sup>1</sup> Khalid ibn-al-Walid was the hero of these wars. Within some six months his generalship had reduced the tribes of Central Arabia to submission. First he subjugated the Tayyi'; then the Asad and Ghatafan, whose prophet, Talhah, the Moslems scoffingly styled Tulayhah; and finally the banu-Hanifah in al-Yamamah, who had gathered under

the banner of a prophet whose name, Musaylimah, appears derisively in the Arabic annals in this diminutive form. It was this Musaylimah who offered the most stubborn resistance. He unified his religious and worldly interests with Sajah, possibly a Christian, who was the prophetess and soothsayer of the banu-Tamim and whom he married; with 40,000 men at his command, so we are told, he crushed two Moslem armies before Khalid arrived with a third. Even from among this victorious third Khalid lost enough Koran reciters to endanger the perpetuation of the knowledge of the sacred book. Other campaigns were conducted by various Moslem generals and with varying measures of success<sup>2</sup> in al-Bahrayn,

<sup>1</sup> Baladhuri, p. 94,1. 14 = Hitti, p. 143,1. 23. Consult Baladhuri, pp. 94-107 = Hitti, pp. 143\*62.

'Uman, Hadramawt and al-Yaman, where al-Aswad had been acknowledged prophet. Thus most of the riddah wars were directed not so much toward holding secessionists by force—which is the view of Arab historians—as toward bringing over to Islam many who had until that time been outside the fold.

The peninsula was now united under abu-Bakr by the sword of Khalid. Arabia had to conquer itself before it could conquer the world. The momentum acquired in these internal campaigns, which transformed Arabia for a number of months after the death of the Prophet into an armed camp, had to seek new outlets, and the newly acquired technique of organized warfare had to be applied somewhere. The warlike spirit of the tribes, now brought together into a nominally common fraternity, had to find new channels for asserting itself.

The two cardinal events of late ancient times are the Teutonic migrations resulting in the disruption of the venerable Roman empire, and the Arab conquests which demolished the Persian empire and shook the Byzantine power to its very foundation. Of these two, the Arab conquests culminating in the occupation of Spain marked the beginning of the Middle Ages.<sup>1</sup> If someone in the first third of the seventh Christian century had had the audacity to prophesy that within a decade some unheralded, unforeseen power from the hitherto barbarous and little-known land of Arabia was to make its appearance, hurl itself against the only two world powers of the age, fall heir to the one—the Sasanid—and strip the other—the Byzantine—of its fairest provinces, he would undoubtedly have been declared a lunatic. Yet that was exactly what happened. After the death of the Prophet sterile Arabia seems to have been converted as if by magic into a nursery of heroes the like of whom both in number and quality is hard to find anywhere. The military campaigns of Khalid ibn-al-Walid and 'Amr ibn-al-'As which ensued in al-Traq, Persia, Syria and Egypt are among the most brilliantly executed in the history of warfare and bear favourable comparison with those of Napoleon, Hannibal or Alexander.\*

The enfeebled condition of the rival Byzantines and Sasanids who had conducted internecine wars against each other for many generations; the heavy taxes, consequent upon these wars, imposed on the citizens of both empires and undermining their <sup>1</sup> Henri Pirenne, *Mahomet et Charlemagne*, 7th ed. (Brussels, 1935). sense of loyalty; the previous domestication of Arabian tribes in Syria and Mesopotamia, and particularly along the borders; the existence of schisms in the Christian church resulting in the establishment of Monophysite communities in Syria and Egypt and Nestorian congregations in al-\*Iraq and Persia, together with the persecution by the orthodox church—all

these paved the way for the surprisingly rapid progress of Arabian arms. The Byzantines had neglected the frontier forts. After their victory of Mu'tah, in the land of ancient Moab, over the column sent by the Prophet (Sept. 629), Heraclius stopped the subsidies which the Syro-Arab tribes south of the Dead Sea and on the Madinah-Ghazzah route had regularly received.<sup>1</sup> The native Semites of Syria and Palestine as well as the Hamites of Egypt looked upon the Arabian newcomers as nearer of kin than their hated and oppressive alien overlords. In fact the Moslem conquests may be looked upon as the recovery by the ancient Near East of its early domain. Under the stimulus of Islam the East now awoke and reasserted itself after a millennium of Western domination. Moreover, the tribute exacted by the new conquerors was even less than that exacted by the old, and the conquered could now pursue their religious practices with more freedom and less interference. As for the Arabians themselves, they reoriented a fresh and vigorous stock fired with new enthusiasm, imbued with the will to conquer and emboldened by the utter contempt of death inculcated by their new faith. But no small share of their seemingly miraculous success was due to their application of a military technique adapted to the open steppes of Western Asia and North Africa—the use of cavalry and camelry—which the Romans never mastered.

The “clerical” interpretation of the Islamic movement, emphasized in Arabic sources, makes it entirely or primarily a economic

11            iii\* causes

religious movement and lays no stress on the underlying of the economic causes. The corresponding and equally discredited expansion hypothesis held by many Christians represents the Arabian Moslems as offering the Koran with

the one hand and the sword with the other. Outside of the Arabian peninsula and especially in the instance of the ahi al-kitab (Christians and Jews) there was a third and, from the standpoint of the conquerors, more desirable choice besides the Koran and the sword—tribute.

<sup>1</sup> Theophanes, pp. 335'6-

“Make war . . . upon such of those to whom the Book has been given until they pay tribute offered on the back of their hands, in a state of humiliation.”<sup>21</sup> This third choice was later by the necessity of circumstances offered to Zoroastrians and heathen Berbers and Turks; in the case of all of these theory gave way to expediency. Islam did provide a new battle-cry, a convenient rallying-point and a party watchword. It undoubtedly acted as a cohesive and cementing agency for the heterogeneous masses never before united and furnished a large part of the driving force. But it is hardly in itself enough to explain the conquests. Not fanaticism but economic necessity drove the Bedouin hordes, and most of the armies of conquest were recruited from the Bedouins, beyond the confines of their arid abode to the fair lands of the north. The passion to go to heaven in the next life may have been operative with some, but the desire for the comforts and luxuries of the civilized regions of the Fertile Crescent was just as strong in the case of many.

This economic aspect of the interpretation of the conquests, worked out by Caetani,<sup>22</sup> Becker<sup>23</sup> and other modern critical scholars, was not entirely ignored by the Arab chroniclers of old. Al-Baladhuri, the most judicious of the historians of the conquest, declares that in recruiting for the Syrian campaign abu-Bakr “wrote to the people of Makkah, al-Ta’if, al-Yaman and all the Arabs in Najd and al-Hijaz summoning them to a ‘holy war’ and arousing their desire



for it and for the booty to be got from the Greeks".<sup>24</sup> Rustam, the Persian general who defended his country against the Arab invasion, made the following remark to the Moslem envoy: "I have learned that ye were forced to what ye are doing by nothing but the narrow means of livelihood and by poverty".<sup>5</sup> A verse in the Hamasah of abu-Tam-mam<sup>6</sup> has put the case tersely:

No, not for Paradise didst thou the nomad life forsake;

Rather, I believe, it was thy yearning after bread and dates.

Envisaged in its proper setting, the Islamic expansion marks the final stage in the age-long process of gradual infiltration from the barren desert to the adjacent Fertile Crescent, the last great Semitic migration.

The chroniclers, all of whom viewed the events of the conquest in the light of their subsequent developments, would also have us believe that these campaigns were conducted through the sagacity of the first caliphs, particularly abu-Bakr and 'Umar, in accordance with carefully prearranged plans. History shows but very few cases in which the course of great events was foreseen by those who launched them. Far from being entirely the result of deliberate and cool calculation, the campaigns seem to have started as raids to provide new outlets for the warring spirit of the tribes now forbidden to engage in fratricidal combats, the objective in most cases being booty and not the gaining of a permanent foothold. But the machine so built soon got beyond the control of those who built it. The movement acquired momentum as the warriors passed from victory to victory. It was then that the systematic campaigns began, and the creation of the Arab empire followed inevitably. Its creation was therefore due

less to early design than to the logic of immediate circumstances.

The clerical or theological view favouring a providential interpretation of Islamic expansion, corresponding to the Old Testament interpretation of the Hebrew history and to the medieval philosophy of Christian history, has a faulty philological basis. The term Islam may be used in three senses: originally a religion, Islam later became a state, and finally a culture. Unlike Judaism and the old Buddhism, the religion of Islam proved as much of an aggressive and missionary religion as Christianity. Subsequently it built up a state. The Islam that conquered the northern regions was not the Islamic religion but the Islamic state. The Arabians burst forth upon an unsuspecting world as members of a national theocracy. It was Arabianism and not Muhammadanism that triumphed first. Not until the second and third centuries of the Moslem era did the bulk of the people in Syria, Mesopotamia and Persia profess the religion of Muhammad. Between the military conquest of these regions and their religious conversion a long period intervened. And when they were converted the people turned primarily because of selfinterest—to escape tribute and seek identification with the ruling class. As for Islam as a culture, it developed slowly after

146 RISE OF ISLAM AND THE CALIPHAL STATE part II the military conquests on a substratum composed of the core and heritage of the Syro-Aramaean, Persian and Hellenistic civilizations which had preceded it. With Islam the Near Orient not only recaptured the whole of its former political domain but regained in the realm of culture its ancient intellectual preeminence.

## CHAPTER XII

## THE CONQUEST OF SYRIA

ABOUT the same time that Heraclius, newly hailed deliverer of Christendom and restorer of the unity of the Eastern Empire, was in Jerusalem reinstalling the true Cross,<sup>1</sup> which had just been recovered from the Persians, his troops beyond the Jordan reported an attack by an Arabian band which was repelled with little difficulty. Mu'tah, on the frontier of al-Balqa' to the east of the southern extremity of the Dead Sea, was the scene of the encounter. Zayd ibn-Hârithah, the adopted son of Muhammad, was the leader; under him were 3000 men.<sup>2</sup> Zayd lost his life in the raid and the newly converted Khalid ibn-al-Walid succeeded in leading the remnant of the shattered army back to al-Madinah. The ostensible object of the raid was to avenge the martyrdom of the Prophet's emissary sent to the Ghassânid prince of Busra; the real one was to secure the coveted Mash-rafiyah<sup>3</sup> swords manufactured at Mu'tah and neighbouring towns with a view to using them in the impending attack on Makkah. The event was naturally interpreted as one of the ordinary raids to which the settled peoples of the borderland had long been accustomed; but actually it was the first gun in a struggle that was not to cease until the proud Byzantine capital had fallen (1453) to the latest champions of Islam and the name of Muhammad substituted for that of Christ on the walls of the most magnificent cathedral of Christendom, St. Sophia.

The Mu'tah engagement was the only campaign against Syria in the lifetime of the Prophet. The Tabük<sup>4</sup> expedition in the following year (A.H. 9/630) led by him in person was bloodless, though it netted a few Jewish and Christian oases.

At the conclusion of the Riddah wars in the autumn of 633,

<sup>1</sup> Sept. 14, 629, still celebrated with bonfire in the Lebanon.

\* Tabari, vol. i, p. 1610. Cf. Theophanes, p. 336.

<sup>3</sup> From Mashârif al-Sham, i.e. the highlands overlooking Syria. M. J. de Goeje,

Mémoire sur la conquête de la Syme (Leyden, 19°°)> P\* 5

<sup>4</sup> Wâqidi, pp. 425 seq.', Balâdhuri, p. 59 = Hitti, p. 92.

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three detachments of about 3000 men each, led respectively by 'Amr ibn-al-'Aṣ, Yazid ibn-abi-Sufyan and Shurahbil ibn-Hasanah,<sup>25</sup> marched northward and began operations in southern and south-eastern Syria. Yazid had as standard bearer his brother Mu'awiyah, the future distinguished founder of the Umayyad dynasty. Yazid and Shurahbil took the direct Tabuk-Ma'an route, whereas 'Amr, who in case of unified action was to be commander in chief, took the coast route via Aylah. The numbers of each detachment were later augmented to some 75°° men. Abu-'Ubaydah ibn-al-Jarrah, soon to become generalissimo, probably headed one of the reinforcements and took the famous pilgrims' route which followed the older transport route from al-Madīnah to Damascus.

In the first encounter, at Wadi al-'Arabah, the great depression south of the Dead Sea, Yazid triumphed over Sergius the patrician of Palestine, whose headquarters were at Caesarea (Qaysariyah). On their retreat towards Ghazzah the remnant of the several thousand Byzantine troops under Sergius were overtaken at Dathin and almost annihilated (February 4, 634). In other places, however, the natural advantages of the Byzantines were telling and the Moslem invaders were being harassed. Heraclius, whose ancestral home was Edessa (al-Ruha') and whose six years'

campaigning had cleared .the Persians from Syria and Egypt, hastened from Emesa (Hirns) to organize and dispatch to the south a fresh army under his brother Theodorus.

In the meantime Khalid ibn-al-Walld, “the sword of Allah”,<sup>26</sup> who was operating in al-Traq at the head of some five hundred Riddah veterans in co-operation with the banu-Shayban, a subtribe of the Bakr ibn-Wa’il domiciled on the Persian border, was ordered by abu-Bakr to rush to the relief of his fellow generals on the Syrian front. Though a minor affair in itself and undertaken possibly without the knowledge of the caliph, chronologically the raid -on al-Traq stands at the commencement of the Moslem military enterprises. But from the standpoint of al-Madlnah and al-Hijaz neighbouring Syria was the place of chief concern. Before abu-Bakr issued his orders al-Hlrah in al-'Iraq had capitulated to Khalid and his ally al-Muthanna ibn-

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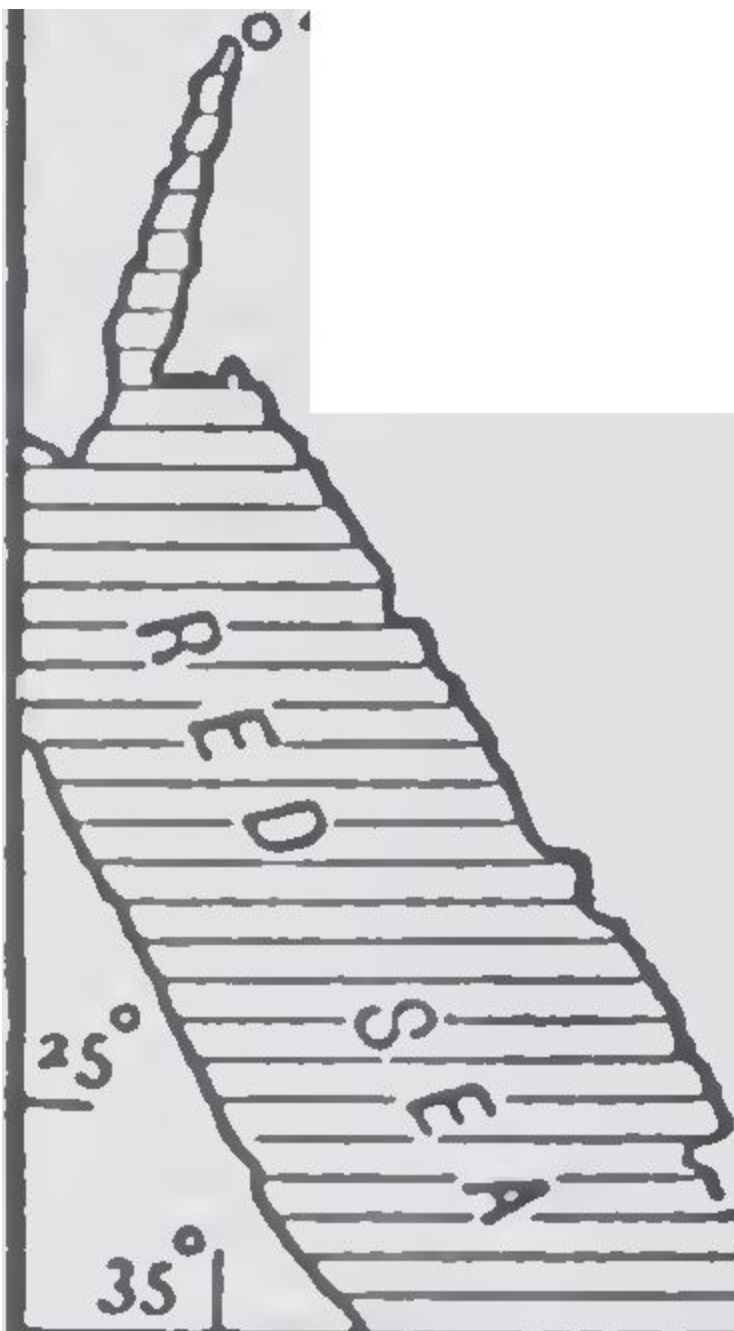
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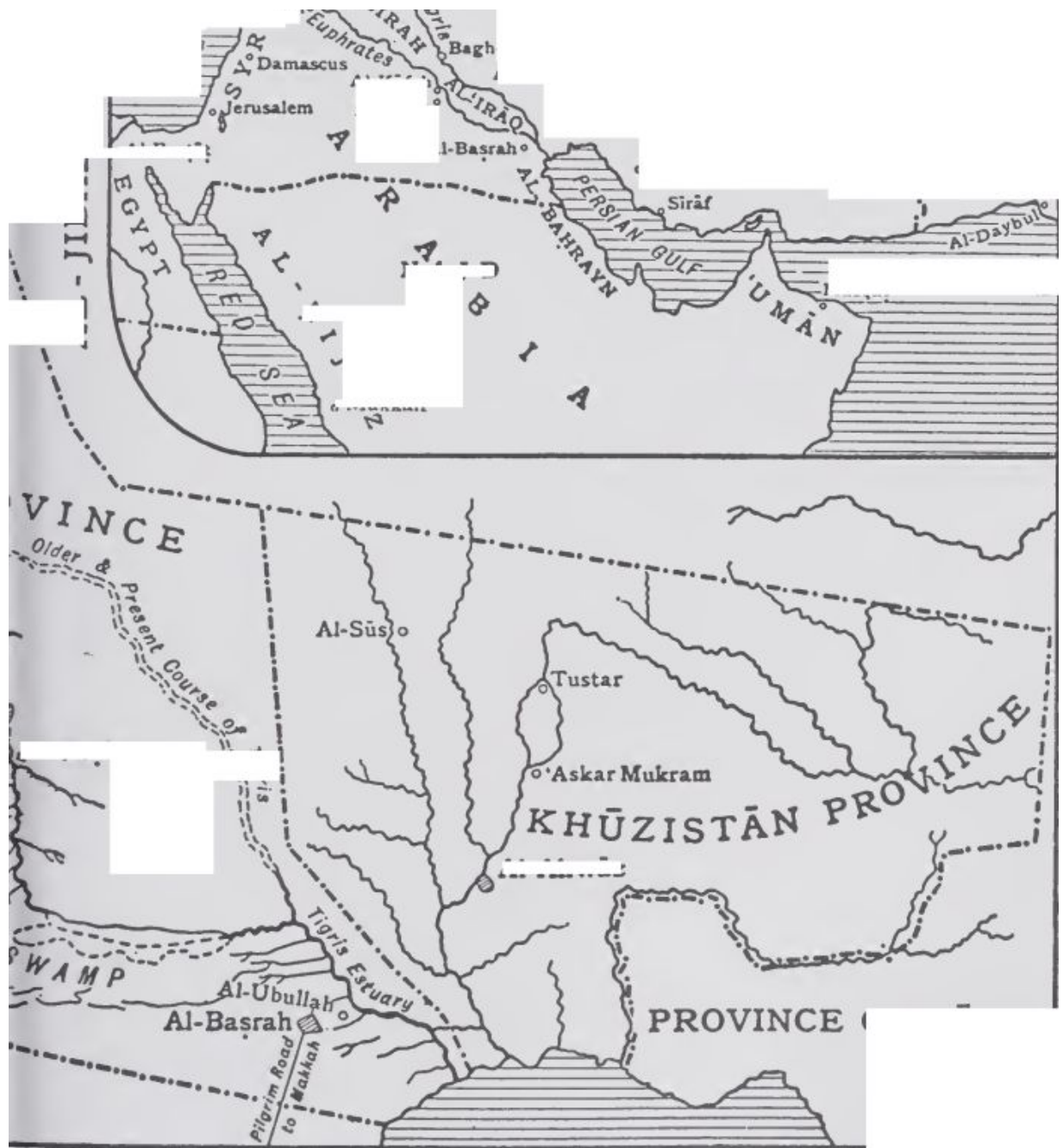
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Harithah, the chief of the Shayban Bedouins, for a consideration of 60,000 dirhams. This town with its Arab Christian kinglet was the earliest acquisition of Islam outside the peninsula and the first apple to fall from the Persian tree. 'Ayn al-Tamr, a fortified place in the desert north-west of al-Kufah, had also been captured just before the famous march on Syria.

Khalid's itinerary through the desert presents many historical Khalid's and geographical problems, for different authors have given us different routes and conflicting dates.<sup>1</sup> As reconstructed from a critical examination of all the sources<sup>2</sup> his march probably started from al-Hirah (March 634) and led westward through the desert to the oasis of Dumat<sup>3</sup> al-Jandal (modern al-Jawf), situated midway between al-Traq and Syria on the easiest route. Once in Dumah he could have continued through Wadi al-Sirhan (ancient Batn al-Sirr) to Busra, the first gateway of Syria; but forts lay on the way. Therefore Khalid took the north-western route from Dumah to Quraqir\* on the eastern boundary of Wadi Sirhan and thence pushed due northward

to Suwa,<sup>5</sup> the second gateway of Syria, a journey of five days in an almost waterless desert. A certain Rafi\* ibn-'Umayr of the Tayyi' tribe acted as guide. Water for the troops was carried in bags; but for the horses the paunches of the old camels, later to be s'augthered for food, served as reservoirs.<sup>®</sup> The troops, five to eight hundred in all, rode camels; the few horses to be used at the time of the encounter were led alongside. At one spot Rafi', with eyes so dazzled by the rays of the sun reflected from the sand that he could not see the expected sign for water, besought the men to look for a box-thorn (ǧawsaj'). As they dug near it they struck damp sand whence water trickled forth, to the relief of the distressed army.

With dramatic suddenness Khalid appeared in the neighbourhood of Damascus (Dimashq) and directly in the rear of the Byzantine army after only eighteen days' journey. Here he

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Baladhuri, pp. 110-12; Ya'qubi, Tarikh, vol. ii, pp. 150-51, • Tabari, vol. i, pp. 2111-13, 2121-4; ibn-'Asakir, vol. i, p. 130; ibn-al-Athir, al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh, ed. C. J. Tomberg, vol. ii (Leyden, 1867), pp. 3<sup>12</sup>\*13-

\* Alois Musil, Arabia Deserta (New York, 1927), PP- 553'73

<sup>3</sup> Mentioned in Gen. 25 : 14, Is. 21 : ii.

<sup>4</sup> Modern Qulban Qaraqir.

<sup>5</sup> Near modern Sab' Biyar (seven wells) north-east of Damascus.

<sup>6</sup> Ashurbanipal refers to enemy Arabs who "ripped open their riding-cameli<sup>w</sup> to quench their thirst; Luckenbill, vol. ii, § 827; Musil, Arabia Deserta, p 570.

began his marauding expeditions in the course of one of which he encountered and defeated the Christian forces of the Ghas-sanids at Marj Rahit<sup>27</sup> on their Easter Sunday. Thence Khalid continued his triumphal march against Busra (Eski-Sham or Old Damascus). Here he evidently succeeded in effecting a junction with the other Arabian forces, resulting in the bloody victory at Aj-nadayn<sup>28</sup> on July 30, 634, which laid open before them practically all Palestine. With the junction of the forces Khalid assumed supreme command of the united army. Systematic campaigning now began. Busra, one of the Ghassanid capitals, fell without much resistance. Fihl (or Fahl, Gr. Pella), east of the Jordan and commanding its crossing, followed suit on January 23, 635. The road towards the Syrian metropolis of Damascus was cleared by the rout of the enemy at Marj al-Suffar<sup>29</sup> on February 25, 635. Two weeks later Khalid stood before the gate of the city reputed by tradition to be the oldest in the world and from whose walls Paul was let down in a basket on that memorable night of his flight. Damascus, soon to become the capital of the Islamic empire, surrendered in September 635, after six months' siege, through treachery on the part of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, who included the father of the celebrated St. John, of whom we shall later hear under the Umayyads. Abandoned by the Byzantine garrison, the civilian population of Damascus capitulated. The terms served as a model for future arrangements with the remaining Syro-Palestinian cities\*

<sup>1</sup>

Abu-Tammam, p. 562; cf. Lyall, Translations, p. xxvii.

<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> John L. Burckhardt, *Travels in Arabia* (London, 1829), vol. i, p. 122.

[3](#)

His tomb is still standing in Damascus.

[4](#)

Such Ar. words of Ethiopic origin as *bur han* (proof), *hawariyun* (Christ's disciples), *jahannam* (hell, originally Heb.), *ma idah* (table), *malak* (angel, originally Heb.), *mihrab* (niche), *minbar* (pulpit), *mushaf* (holy book), *shayidn* (Satan), point to Christian Abyssinian influence over Moslem Hijaz. Al-Suyuti cites in ch. 38 of his *al-Itqan* (Cairo, 1925), vol. i, pp. 135-41, 118 foreign words in the Koran.

[5](#)

See below, p. 117. *Kx.firind* (sword), *fir daws* (Paradise, sur. 18 : 107; 23 : 11), *sijjll* (stone, sur. 105 : 4), *barzakh* (obstacle, sur. 23 : 102; 55 : 20; 25 : 55), *zanjabil* (ginger, sur. 76 : 17, see below, p. 667), etc., are of Persian derivation.

[6](#)

Ibn-Hishám, pp. 217-20; cf. *ibn-Sa<sup>e</sup>d*, vol. i, pt. 1, pp. 136-9.

[7](#)

Koran 17 : 1; Bukhari, vol. iv, pp. 156, 230; al-Baghawi, *Masabih al-Sunnah* (Cairo, 1318), vol. ii, pp. 169-72; al-Khajib, *Mishkát al-Masabih* (St. Petersburg, 1898-9), vol. ii, pp. 124-9.

[8](#)

Miguel Asin, *Islam and the Divine Comedy*, tr. H. Sunderland (London, 1926).

[9](#)

Probably from Ar. barq, lightning. Modern Palestinians call the wailing place “al-Buráq”.

[10](#)

Koran 5 : 92. The Nabataeans had an anti-bacchic deity.

[11](#)

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Koran 2 : 168.

[12](#)

Fasting was ordained in the Madinese period, long after the Abyssinian migration; Koran 2 : 179, 183. Ibn-Hisham, p. 219.

[13](#)

Khaṣib, Mishkdh, vol. i, p. 343.

[14](#)

This copy is said to have been presented by the Turkish authorities to Emperor William II. See Versailles Treaty, Pt. VIII, Sec. II, art. 246.

[15](#)

Arthur Jeffery, *Materials for the History of the Text of the Koran* (Leyden, 1937), PP- i-io; cf. Hartwig Hirschfeld, *New Researches into the Composition and Exegesis of the Koran* (London, 1902), pp. 138 seq.

[16](#)

Cf. Ps. 55 : 17. [17](#) Sahih, vol. i, pp. 85 seq.', cf. Gen. 18 : 23-33.

[17](#)

<sup>8</sup> This is du a, unregulated and private or individual prayer, not to be confused

[18](#)

with the formal faldh.

[19](#)

Suyufi, *Husn*, vol. ii, p. 74; cf. al-Maqrizi, *al-Mawa iz wal- l'tibar*, ed. Gaston Wiet (Cairo, 1922), vol. iii, p. 300; al-Suliik fi Marifat Duwal al-Muluk, tr. M. Quatremere, *Histoire des sultans mamlouks de VEgypte* (Paris, 1845), vol. i (pt. 1), pp. 149-50. The Mahmil, the markab (litter) of the Ruwalah and the Ark of the Covenant may go back to the same ancient Semitic origin.

[20](#)

\* Theoretically there is no secular war in Islam.

[21](#)

Sur. 9 : 29. [21](#) Annali, vol. ii, pp. 831-61.

[22](#)

<sup>3</sup> In Cambridge Medieval History (New York, 1913), vol. ii, ch. xi.

[23](#)

<sup>4</sup> Futuh, p. 107 = Hitti, p. 165.

[24](#)

Baladhuri, pp. 256-7 = Hitti, pp. 411-12.                      \* P. 795-

[25](#)

Ci. al-Ba\$ri,7'«/wAal-Sham, ed. W. N. Lees (Calcutta, 1853-4), pp. 8-11,40-42.

[26](#)

<sup>1</sup> Waqidi, p. 402; ibn-'Asakir, al-Tarikh al-Kabir, ed. 'Abd-al-Qadir Badran, vol. v (Damascus, 1332), pp. 92, 102.

[27](#)

A Ghassanid camp about 15 miles from Damascus, near 'Adhra\*.

[28](#)

Not Jannabatayn; see S. D. Goitein in Journal, American Oriental Society,

[29](#)

vol. lxx (1950), p. 106.

In the name of Allah, the compassionate, the merciful. This is what Khalid ibn-al-Walid would grant to the inhabitants of Damascus if he enters therein: he promises to give them security for their lives, property and churches. Their city wall shall not be demolished, neither shall any Moslem be quartered in their houses. Thereunto we give to them the pact of Allah and the protection of His Prophet, the caliphs and the believers. So long as they pay the poll tax, nothing but good shall befall them.<sup>1</sup> The poll tax was evidently one dinar and one jarib (measure of wheat) on every head, which sum 'Umar ibn-al-Khattab later increased. Ba'labakk, Hirns, Hamah (Epiphania) and other towns fell one after the other like ninepins. Nothing stood in





, w«ll«r U\*. ic.

the way of the advancing conqueror. "The people of Shayzar [Larissa] went out to meet him accompanied by players on the tambourines and singers and bowed down before him."<sup>1</sup>

The decisive battle of Yarmuk

In the meantime Heraclius had mustered an army of some 50,000 again under his brother Theodorus, and was prepared for a decisive stand. Khalid relinquished for the time being Hirs, even Damascus and other strategic towns, and concentrated some 25,000 men <sup>2</sup> at the valley of Yarmuk,<sup>3</sup> the eastern tributary of the Jordan. Months of skirmishing came to a climax on August 20, 636, a hot day clouded by the wind-blown dust<sup>4</sup> of one of the most torrid spots on earth and undoubtedly fixed upon by Arabian generalship. Before the terrific onslaught of the sons of the desert the efforts of the Byzantine troops, aided by the chants and prayers of their priests and the presence of

their crosses,<sup>5</sup> proved of no avail. Those of the Byzantines and their Armenian and Arab mercenaries who were not slaughtered on the spot were relentlessly driven into the steep bed of the river and the Ruqqad valley; the few who managed to escape across it were almost annihilated on the other side. Theodorus himself fell and the imperial army was converted into a fleeing, panic-stricken mob. The fate of Syria was decided. One of the fairest provinces was for ever lost to the Eastern Empire. "Farewell, O Syria, and what an excellent country this is for the enemy!"\* were Heraclius' words of adieu.

The turn of the administrator, the pacifier, now came. Abu-'Ubaydah, one of the most esteemed Companions and members of the Madinese theocracy and hitherto a contingent leader on the Syrian front, was appointed by 'Umar governor-general and caliphal vice-regent to replace Khalid, against whom 'Umar seems to have harboured some personal feeling. Abu-<sup>e</sup>Ubaydah accompanied Khalid northward. No further serious resistance stood in the way of the Arabian arms until the natural limits of Syria, the Taurus Mountains, were reached, and no difficulty was experienced in reclaiming the cities previously conquered. A

<sup>1</sup> Baladhuri, p. 131 = Hitti, pp. 201-2.

\* Arab estimates of the Byzantine army at 100,000 to 240,000 and of the Moslem army at 40,000 are as unreliable as the Greek. Cf. Michel le Syrien, *Chronique*, ed. J.-B. Chabot, vol. iv (Paris, 1910), p. 416; tr. Chabot, vol. ii (Paris, 1901), p. 421.

<sup>3</sup> Near the junction of the Yarmuk and al-Ruqqad. Not to be confused with Jarmuth of Josh. 10:3, modern Khirbat Yarmuk, near Ajnadayn.

<sup>4</sup> See H. R. P. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert* (London, 1949), pp. 258-62.

• Bašri, p. 197; ibn-‘Asakir, vol. i, p. 163. • Baladhuri, p. 137 = Hitti, p. 2JO. statement attributed to the people of Hirs is representative of the sentiment cherished by the native Syrians towards the new conquerors: “We like your rule and justice far better than the state of oppression and tyranny under which we have been living”.<sup>1</sup> Antioch, Aleppo and other northern towns were soon added to the list. Qinnasrin (Chaicis) was the only city that was not easily dealt with. In the south only Jerusalem and Caesarea, which was strictly Hellenized, held their gates stubbornly closed in the face of the invaders, the former till 638 and the latter till October 640. Caesarea received help by sea which the Arabians had no means of intercepting, but after seven years of intermittent raids and siege it succumbed before the attack of Mu'awiyah, aided by the treachery of a Jew within the walls. Between 633 and 640 all Syria from south to north was subdued.

This “easy conquest” <sup>2</sup> of the land had its own special causes. The Hellenistic culture imposed on the land since its conquest by Alexander (332 B.C.) was only skin-deep and limited to the urban population. The rural people remained ever conscious of cultural and racial differences between themselves and their masters. This racial antipathy between the Semitic population of Syria and the Greek rulers was augmented by sectarian differences. The Mono-phsyte church of Syria insisted that Christ had but one nature instead of the two (divine and human) formulated by the Synod of Chalcedon (451) and accepted by the Greek church of Byzantium. The christological compromise of Heraclius, promulgated in 638 on the basis of a formula devised by Sergius<sup>3</sup> the patriarch of Constantinople, aimed



at ignoring the question of the nature or natures in the person of Christ and emphasizing his one will (thelema). Hence the name Monothelite for a Christian who accepted the new formula. Like other religious compromises this one neither pleased the orthodox nor satisfied the dissenters. Instead it resulted in the creation of a third problem and a new party. But the bulk of the population of Syria remained Mono-physite. Behind their development and maintenance of a separate Syrian church there undoubtedly lay a submerged, semi-articulate feeling of nationality.

Just before the fall of Jerusalem the Caliph 'Umar came to the The adminis-<sup>1</sup> Baladhuri, p. 137, l. 13 = Hitti, p. 211. tration o;

<sup>1</sup> Baladhuri, p. 116, l. 18, p. 126, ll. 13. 19 = Hitti, p. 179, l. 17, p. 193, l. 22, <sup>new</sup> p. 194, l. 7. • A Syrian of Jacobite lineage. <sup>crn</sup> Or ^ military' camp of al-Jabiyah, which lay north of the Yarmuk battlefield and whose name is still borne by the western gate of Damascus; his purpose was to solemnize the conquest, fix the status of the conquered, consult with his generalissimo, abu-\*Ubaydah, whom he had substituted for Khalid after the Yarmuk battle, and lay down necessary regulations for the administration of the newly acquired territory. When Jerusalem fell it too was visited by 'Umar. As the patriarch of Jerusalem, Sophronius, styled the "honey-tongued defender of the church", was showing the aged caliph round the holy places he was so impressed by the uncouth mien and shabby raiment of his Arabian visitor that he is said to have turned to an attendant and remarked in Greek, "Truly this is the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the Prophet as standing in the holy place".<sup>2</sup>

Soon abu-\*Ubaydah fell victim at 'Amwas (or 'Amawas) to an epidemic which is said to have carried off 20,000 of his troops, and after the death of his successor, Yazid, the power passed to the hands of the shrewd Mu'awiyah.

Syria was now divided into four military districts (sing. juncT) corresponding to the Roman and Byzantine provinces found at the time of the conquest. These were: Dimashq, Hirns, al-Urdunn (Jordan) comprising Galilee to the Syrian desert, and Filastm (Palestine), the land south of the great plain of Esdraelon (Marj ibn-'Amir). The northern district, Qinnasrin, was added later by the Umayyad Caliph Yazid I.

So swift and easy an acquisition of so strategic a territory from the first potentate of the age gave the newly rising power of Islam prestige in the eyes of the world and, what is more important, confidence in its own destiny. From Syria the hordes swept into Egypt and thence made their triumphant way through the rest of northern Africa. With Syria as a base the onward push to Armenia, northern Mesopotamia, Georgia and Adhar-bayjan became possible, as did the raids and attacks which for many years to come were to be carried on against Asia Minor. With the help of Syrian troops Spain in far-off Europe was in less than a hundred years from the death of the Prophet brought within the ever widening circle of Islam.

## CHAPTER XIII

### ? .L-\*IRAQ AND PERSIA CONQUERED

When Khalid in 634 made his memorable dash westward from al-Hirah he left the 'Iraq front in the hands of his Bedouin ally al-Muthanna ibn-Harithah, sheikh of the banu-Shayban. In the meantime the Persians were preparing a counter-attack and succeeded in almost annihilating the

Arabian bands at the Battle of the Bridge <sup>3</sup> near al-Hirah, November 26, 634. Undaunted, al-Muthanna undertook a new raid and in October or November of the following year scored over the Persian general Mihran a victory at al-Buwayb on the Euphrates. But al-Muthanna was no more than a Bedouin chief, with no Madinese or Makkan connections, and had not heard of or accepted Islam until after the death of the Prophet. The Caliph 'Umar therefore chose Sa'd ibn-abi-Waqqas, one of those Companions promised Paradise by Muhammad at the conclusion of the Battle of Badr, as commander in chief and sent him at the head of new reinforcements to al-Traq. By that time the victory of Yarmuk had been won and the fate of Syria sealed. Sa'd with his 10,000 men measured his strength for the first time with the Persian Rustam, the administrator of the empire, at al-Qadisiyah, not far from al-Hirah. The day (the last of May or first of June 637) was extremely hot and was rendered dark by the wind-blown dust, a day not unlike that on which the battle of Yarmuk was fought. The same tactics were used with the same results. Rustam was killed, the large Sasanid army dissolved in panic and all the fertile lowlands of al-'Iraq<sup>2</sup> west of the Tigris (Dijlah) lay open to the invaders. The welcome on the part of the Aramaean peasants was no less cordial than that tendered by the Syrian peasants, and for much the same reasons. The Semitic 'Iraqis

<sup>1</sup> Across the Euphrates. Baladhuri, pp. 251-2; T<sup>at</sup>><sup>arb</sup> vol. i, pp. 2194-2201.

\* 'Iraq, probably a loan-word from Pahlawi meaning "lowland", corresponds to Ar. Sawad, black land, used to bring out the contrast with the Arabian desert Yaqut, vol. iii, p. 174; cf A. T. Olmstead, History of Assyria (New York, 1927), p.60. looked upon the Iranian masters as aliens and felt closer kinship with the newcomers. As Christians they

had not been especially favoured by the followers of Zoroaster. For centuries before Islam petty Arab chieftains and kinglets had flourished on the 'Iraq-Arabian border. The Arab control of the valley of the two rivers was anticipated by intimate relations with its peoples dating to the early Babylonian era, by growing acquaintance with its culture and by the admixture of border Bedouins with its inhabitants. As in the case of Syria after Yarmuk an influx of fresh Arabian tribes, attracted by the new economic advantages, took place into the newly conquered territory.

The Persian capital, Ctesiphon,<sup>4</sup> was Sa'd's next objective. With characteristic dash and energy he pushed ahead and at a convenient ford effected the crossing of the Tigris, much swollen by the spring floods. The feat was accomplished without loss of life to the army and was hailed as a miracle by Moslem chroniclers. In June 637 Sa'd made his triumphal entry into the capital whose garrison together with the emperor had deserted it. Arab chroniclers outdo themselves in their extravagant description of the booty and treasures captured therein. Their estimate is nine billion dirhams.<sup>5</sup>

The occupation of the greatest royal city in hither Asia brought the sons of barren Arabia into direct contact with the luxuries and comforts of the then modern high life. The Iwa<n Kisra, the royal palace with its spacious audience chamber, graceful arches and sumptuous furnishings and decorations—all celebrated in later Arabic poetry—was now at the disposal of Sa'd. Amusing as well as instructive are some of the anecdotes embedded in the Arabic chronicles which throw light upon the comparative culture of the two peoples. Camphor, never seen before, was naturally taken for salt and used as such in cooking.<sup>6</sup> “The yellow” (al-safra , i.e. gold), something unfamiliar in Arabia, was offered by

rnajiy in exchange for “the white” (al-bayda , silver).<sup>7</sup> When an Arabian warrior at al-Hirah was blamed for

#### CH. xiii AL-'IRÄQ AND PERSIA CONQUERED 157

selling a nobleman’s daughter who fell as his share of booty for only 1000 dirhams, his reply was that he “never thought there was a number above ten hundred”.<sup>8 9</sup>

After al-Qädislyah and al-Madä’in the systematic conquest of the empire began from the newly founded military base at al-Basrah. By express command of the caliph the military camp of al-Küfah, near older al-Hirah, was to be the capital in preference to Ctesiphon, where Sa'd had built one of the first Moslem places of worship in al-Träq.

In the meantime the Säsänid Yazdagird III and his imperial court were fleeing northward. Another futile stand (end of 637) at Jalülä’ on the fringe of the Persian highlands and all of al- Iräq lay prostrate at the feet of the conquerors. In 641 al-Mawsil (Mosul), near the site of ancient Nineveh, was reached and captured. This brought to a successful culmination the expedition which was started from northern Syria by Tyäd ibn-Ghanm. In the same year the last great battle, that of Nihäwand (near ancient Ecbatana), was fought, with a nephew of Sa'd leading the Arabian forces, and resulted in a disastrous defeat of the last remnant of Yazdagird’s army. Khüzistän (ancient Elam, later Susiana, modern 'Arabistän) was occupied in 640 from al-Basrah and al-Küfah. In the meantime an attempt was made on the adjoining province of Pärs (Färis, Persia proper),<sup>10</sup> on the eastern shore of the Persian Gulf, from al-Bahrayn, which with al-Basrah and al-Küfah formed now a third military base of operation against Iran. The stiffening resistance of the non-Semitic population was finally broken by 'Abdulläh ibn-'Ämir, the governor of al-Basrah, who

occupied Istakhr (Persepolis), the chief city of Färis, in 649-50.<sup>10</sup> After Färis the turn of the great and distant province of Khuräsän, in the north-east, came; the path then lay open to the Oxus. The subjection of Mukrän, the coastal region of Baluchistan, shortly after 643 brought the Arabs to the very borders of India.

As early as 640 an attempt was made on Byzantine Armenia by Tyäd. About four years later an expedition set out from Syria

## i<sub>5</sub>8 RISE OF ISLAM AND THE CALIPHAL STATE partii

under the leadership of Habib ibn-Maslamah, but the district was not completely reduced till about 652.<sup>1</sup>

The military camp al-Kufah became the capital of the newly conquered territories. Heedless of 'Umar's insistence on the old-fashioned simplicity characteristic of al-Hijaz, Sa'd erected here a residence modelled on the royal palace of Ctesiphon. The gates of the old capital were transported to the new, a symbolic custom practised repeatedly in the Arab East. Built first of reeds as barracks to house the soldiers and their families, the camp exchanged its huts for unbaked brick houses and soon grew into an important metropolis. Along with its sister camp al-Basrah, al-Kùfah became the political and intellectual centre of Arab Mesopotamia until the 'Abbàsid al-Mansiir built his world-famous city, Baghdad.

In 651 the young and ill-starred Yazdagird, fleeing with his crown, treasures and a few followers, fell victim to the greed of one of his own people in a miller's hut near Marw (Pers. Marv).<sup>2</sup> With his death there came to an ignoble end the last ruler of an empire that had flourished with one interruption for some twelve centuries, an empire that was not fully to rise again for eight hundred years or more.

This initial and inconclusive conquest of Persia took about a decade to achieve; the Moslem arms met with much more stubborn resistance than in Syria. In the campaign some 35,000-40,000 Arabians, inclusive of women, children and slaves, must have taken part. The Persians were Aryans, not Semites; they had enjoyed a national existence of their own for centuries and represented a well-organized military power that had been measuring swords with the Romans for over four hundred years. In the course of the following three centuries of Arab rule Arabic became the official language as well as the speech of cultured society and, to a limited extent, of ordinary parlance. But the old spirit of the subject nation was to rise again and restore its neglected tongue. Persia contributed a large share of the Qar-matian (Carmathian) movement which for many years shook the caliphate to its foundation; it also had much to do with the development of the Shi'ite sect and with the founding of the Fàtimid dynasty which ruled Egypt for over two centuries. Its

<sup>1</sup> Consult Baladhuri, pp. 193-212; Caetani, vol. iv, pp. 50-53, vol. vii, pp. 453-4.

\* Cf. Michel le Syrien, vol. iv, p. 418 = vol. ii, p. 424.

AL-'IRAQ AND PERSIA CONQUERED art, its literature, its philosophy, its medicine, became the common property of the Arab world and conquered the conquerors. Some of the most brilliant stars in the intellectual firmament of Islam during its first three centuries were Islamized Iranians.

While this column of Arabian troops was operating eastward under Sa'd another under the more illustrious 'Amr ibn-al-'As was operating to the west. The latter was bringing within the horns of the rising crescent the people of the valley of the Nile and the Berbers of North Africa. Ostensibly religious,

but mainly political and economic, this unparalleled Arabian expansion had now grown into an empire as far flung as that of Alexander, with the caliph at al-Madinah trying to regulate the flow of a torrent whose tributaries, ever increasing in number and size, were swelling the stream beyond all control.

## CHAPTER XIV

### EGYPT, TRIPOLIS AND BARQAH ACQUIRED

The strategic position of Egypt, lying so dangerously near to both Syria and al-Hijāz, the richness of its grain-producing soil, which made the land the granary of Constantinople, the fact that its capital Alexandria was the base of the Byzantine navy and that the country was the door to the rest of the North African corridor—all these considerations caused Arabian eyes to turn covetously towards the valley of the Nile quite early in the era of expansion.

The conquest of Egypt falls within the period of systematic campaigning rather than casual raiding. Seeking new fields in which to outshine his illustrious rival Khālid, 'Amr ibn-al-ʿĀs, who in the Jahiliyah days had made many a caravan trip to Egypt and was familiar with its cities and roads,<sup>1</sup> took advantage of the presence of 'Umar in Jerusalem to secure his half-hearted authorization for a campaign against the ancient land of the Pharaohs. But when 'Umar had returned to al-Madinah and consulted with 'Uthmān and others who pointed out the risks and perils involved, he dispatched a messenger to halt the advance of the column. The caliphal message, we are told, overtook 'Amr just before crossing the Egypt-Palestine border, but, scenting the unfavourable contents thereof and having in mind 'Umar's previous instructions: "If my letter ordering thee to turn back from Egypt overtakes thee before entering any part of it then turn



back; but if thou enter the land before the receipt of my letter, then proceed and solicit Allah's aid",<sup>2</sup> 'Amr did not open the letter until he got to al-'Arlsh (December 639). This 'Amr was a Qurayshite, forty-five years old, warlike, fiery, eloquent and shrewd. He had already to his credit the conquest of Palestine west of the Jordan. The part he was later to play

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, *Futüh Misr*, ed. C. C. Torrey (New Haven, 1922), p. 53.

<sup>1</sup> Ya'qübi, vol. ii, pp. 168-9; ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, pp. 56-7; J. Wellhausen, *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten*, vol. vi, *Prolegomena zur ältesten Geschichte des Islams* (Berlin, 1899), p. 93.

CH. xiv EGYPT, TRIPOLIS AND BARQAH ACQUIRED t6i in the capture of the caliphate for his bosom friend IVlu'awiyah won him the epithet "one of the four Arabian 'political geniuses' \duhat\ of Islam".<sup>1</sup> The route he took with his 4000 riders was the same beaten track along the coast trod by Abraham, Cambyses, Alexander, Antiochus, the Holy Family, Napoleon and Djemal Pasha. It was the international highway of the ancient world connecting its most important centres of civilization.<sup>2</sup>

The first fortified place which the Arabian column struck—and that in the middle of January 640 <sup>3</sup>—was al-Farama\* (Pelusium), the key to eastern Egypt. After about a month of resistance the city fell and its defences, probably not repaired since the recent Persian invasion (616) and occupation, were razed. Bilbays (variants Bilbis, Balbis) north-east of Cairo came next, and others followed suit. At last the strong castle of Babylon<sup>4</sup> (Babalyun), across from the isle of al-Rawdah in the Nile, stood in the way of further progress. Cyrus (Ar. al-Muqawqis), who since the reoccupation of the country in 631 by Heraclius had been

acting as patriarch of Alexandria and imperial representative in civil administration, hurried to Babylon with his commander in chief the Augustalis Theodorus and the troops. 'Amr pitched camp outside Babylon, biding his time and awaiting reinforcements. Soon they came, headed by al-Zubayr ibn-al-'Awwam, the celebrated Companion of the Prophet, thus augmenting the Arabian column to about 10,000 men who were to oppose the 20,000 or so of the Byzantine army exclusive of the fortress garrison numbering about 5000. While besieging Babylon, 'Amr attacked <sup>e</sup>Ayn Shams<sup>5</sup> in July 640. The Byzantine army was utterly routed. Theodorus fled to Alexandria and Cyrus was shut up in Babylon. The siege was pressed by the Arabians, who had no engineering or mechanical devices for reducing the fort. The treacherous Cyrus secretly sought to buy off the besiegers, but to no avail. The usual three choices were offered: Islam, tribute or the sword.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Hajar, *al-Isabah fi Tamyiz al-Sahabah*, vol. v (Cairo, 1907), p. 3.

\* See Olmstead, *History of Palestine*, pp. 44-8.

<sup>8</sup> This as well as the other dates of the conquest of Egypt are not certain. Tabari vol. i, p. 2592, 1. 16, chooses Rabi' I, 16 (Ap. 637) as the date of the conquest of Egypt; cf. ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, pp. 53, 58.

<sup>4</sup> See A. J. Butler, *The Arab Conquest of Egypt* (Oxford, 1902), pp. 245-7.

<sup>8</sup> Lit. "the spring of the sun", ancient Heliopolis, On (On) of the Old Testament and the hieroglyphic inscriptions.

CH. xiv EGYPT, TRIPOLIS AND BARQAH ACQUIRED 163 The following words put in the mouth of Cyrus' envoys purport to sum up the impression created by the Arabians:

We have witnessed a people to each and every one of whom death is preferable to life, and humility to prominence, and to none of whom this world has the least attraction. They sit not except on the ground, and eat naught but on their knees. Their leader [amir] is like unto one of them: the low cannot be distinguished from the high, nor the master from the slave. And when the time of prayer comes none of them absents himself, all wash their extremities and humbly observe their prayer.<sup>[11](#)</sup>

Asking for a delegation to meet him at al-Rawdah to negotiate peace, Cyrus was shocked to receive one headed by a negro, Ubadah ibn-al-Samit. The three alternatives were reiterated. Cyrus agreed to pay tribute and hastened to Alexandria to forward the terms to the emperor. They were not pleasing to Heraclius, who charged his episcopal viceroy with treason and sent him into exile.

In the meantime the siege of Babylon was being carried on without intermission. At the end of seven months al-Zubayr with his comrades succeeded in filling a part of the moat, scaling the wall on a ladder and overpowering the guard as well as the garrison. The battle-cry of Islam, Allahu akbar (God is most great), echoed victoriously in the halls of the fortress on April 6, 641.<sup>[12](#)</sup>

After reducing the eastern border of the Delta the iron grip of 'Amr began to fasten itself on the apex. Nikiu (Ar. Naqyus, modern Shabshir) fell on May 13 and a bloody slaughter ensued. But Alexandria (al-Iskandarlyah), after Constantinople the finest and strongest city in the world, was still ahead.

With fresh recruits from Arabia swelling his army to about 20,000 'Amr found himself one morning gazing at the seemingly impregnable line of walls and towers guarding Egypt's capital and leading port. On one side rose the lofty Serapeum,<sup>13</sup> which once housed the temple of Serapis and the great library of Alexandria; on the other loomed the beautiful cathedral of St. Mark, once the Caesarion<sup>14</sup> temple begun by Cleopatra in honour of Julius Cæsar and finished by Augustus; farther west stood the two red Uswan(Aswân)-granite needles ascribed to Cleopatra, but in reality the work of Thutmose III (ca. 1450 B.C.), the same two which now adorn the Thames Embankment in London and Central Park in New York; and in the background towered the Pharos, flashing the sun's rays by day and its own fire by night and rightly considered one of the seven wonders of the world.<sup>15</sup> No doubt to the desert Arabs the impression of such a sight must have been not unlike that which the skyline of modern New York, with its towering skyscrapers, makes upon the immigrant.

Alexandria boasted a garrison some 50,000 strong. Behind it lay the whole strength of the Byzantine navy, of which the city was the base. The invaders, far inferior in number and in equipment, had not a single ship, no siege machines and no immediate source of supply for their man-power.

John of Nikiu, a contemporary authority, describes the first repulse the helpless Arabians suffered under the pounding of catapults from the high walls.<sup>16</sup> Leaving a contingent behind, 'Amr fought his way back to Babylon and later engaged in a few marauding expeditions to Upper Egypt. After the death of Heraclius (February 641) his grandson Constans II (Qustantln, 641-68) succeeded. Cyrus, restored to favour, returned to Alexandria in order to conclude peace. Hoping to administer the country for the Arabians independently of Constantinople, the bishop signed with

'Amr in Babylon on November 8, 641, a treaty which may be termed the Treaty of Alexandria, accepting the payment of a fixed tribute of two dinars per adult head and a land tax payable in kind and agreeing not to allow a Byzantine army to return or attempt to recover the land. The city was evacuated in September 642. The Emperor Constans, weak and young, ratified the treaty which meant the transference of one of the fairest provinces of the empire to Arabian hands.

The glad tidings were sent to 'Umar in al-Madinah in the following words: "I have captured a city from the description of which I shall refrain. Suffice it to say that I have seized therein 4000 villas with 4000 baths, 40,000 poll-tax-paying Jews and ch. xiv EGYPT, TRIPOLIS AND BARQAH ACQUIRED 165 four hundred places of entertainment for the royalty."<sup>1</sup> The caliph entertained his general's messenger with bread and dates and held in the Prophet's Mosque a simple but dignified service of thanksgiving.

The native Copts of Egypt, we are informed by ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam<sup>2</sup> (f 257 = ^7l)> who gives us the earliest surviving account of the conquest of Egypt, were instructed from the very beginning by their bishop in Alexandria to offer no resistance to the invaders. This is not surprising in view of the religious persecution to which they as Monophysites had been subjected by the official Melkite (royal) church. For years Heraclius had tried, through his agent Cyrus, to forbid the Egyptian (Coptic) form of worship and to force his new Monothelite doctrine on a reluctant church. On account of his relentless persecution of the priesthood of the Coptic church Cyrus was regarded as the Antichrist by the later native tradition.

In accordance with 'Umar's policy the site on which 'Amr pitched his camp outside Babylon became the new capital,

receiving the name al-Fustat<sup>1</sup> and corresponding to the military camps of al-Jabiyah in Syria, al-Basrah and al-Kufah in al-Traq. There 'Amr erected a simple mosque, the first to rise in Egypt (641-2), which has survived in name until today and whose present form is the result of repeated rebuildings and additions. Al-Fustat (Old Cairo, Misr al-'Atiqah) continued to be the capital until the Fatimids in 969 built their Cairo (al-Qahirah). In order to open a direct waterway to the holy cities of Arabia 'Amr now cleared the ancient Pharaonic canal which under the name Khalij (canal of) Amir al-Mu'mimn passed through Heliopolis and connected the Nile north of Babylon with al-Qulzum<sup>4</sup> on the Red Sea.<sup>5</sup> Trajan had cleared the canal, but through neglect it had silted up since his reign. After a few months of forced labour, and before the death of 'Umar in 644, twenty ships laden with Egyptian products were unloading their cargoes in Arabian ports.<sup>6</sup> This canal was later known as al-Khalij al-Hakimi, after the Fatimid Caliph al-Hakim (f 1021), and under many other names continued to exist in some parts till the end of the nineteenth century.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, p. 82; cf. Zotenoerg, p. 463. 2  
Pp. 58-9.

<sup>2</sup> Latin fossatum = camp, through Byz. Gr. phossatun.

<sup>4</sup> The Klyasma of antiquity, modern Suez.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Mas'udi, vol. iv, p. 99. • Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 177,

The old machinery of Byzantine administration, including the financial system, was—as one might expect—adopted by the new rulers with certain amendments in the line of centralization. The time-honoured policy of exploiting the fertile valley of the Nile and using it as a “milch cow” was

maintained to the utmost, judging by the evidence furnished by newly discovered Egyptian papyri. Shortly before his death 'Umar, feeling that 'Amr was not securing enough revenue, put 'Abdullah ibn-Sa'd ibn-abi-Sarh in charge of Upper Egypt. The new caliph, 'Uthman, recalled 'Amr from the country and appointed (ca. 645) 'Abdullah, who was his own foster brother, over all Egypt.

Toward the end of 645 the Alexandrians, restive under the new yoke, appealed to the Emperor Constans, who dispatched some 300 ships under Manuel, an Armenian, to reclaim the city.<sup>17</sup> The Arabian garrison of 1000 men was slaughtered and Alexandria was once more in Byzantine hands and a base for new attacks on Arab Egypt. 'Amr was immediately reinstated. He met the enemy near Nikiu, where the Byzantines suffered a heavy slaughter. Early in 646 the second capture of Alexandria took place. The impregnable walls of the city were demolished and the ancient Egyptian capital has ever since remained in Moslem hands.

### The library of Alexandria

The story that by the caliph's order 'Amr for six long months fed the numerous bath furnaces of the city with the volumes of the Alexandrian library is one of those tales that make good fiction but bad history. The great Ptolemaic Library was burnt as early as 48 B.C. by Julius Caesar. A later one, referred to as the Daughter Library, was destroyed about A.D. 389 as a result of an edict by the Emperor Theodosius. At the time of the Arab conquest, therefore, no library of importance existed in Alexandria and no contemporary writer ever brought the charge against 'Amr or 'Umar. 'Abd-al-Latif al-Baghdadi,<sup>18</sup> who died as late as A.H. 629 (1231), seems to have been the first to relate the tale. Why he did it

we do not know; however, his version was copied and amplified by later authors.<sup>[19](#)</sup>

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After the conquest 'Uthman wanted 'Amr to remain at the head of the army with 'Abdullah as the financial administrator. The suggestion elicited from 'Amr the famous reply: "My position will then be that of one who holds the cow by its two horns while another milks it".<sup>1</sup> 'Abdullah was thereupon reinstalled as caliphal vicegerent.

Less a soldier than a financier, 'Abdullah now proceeded to carry on campaigns to the west and south mainly for booty. He succeeded in extending the boundaries in both directions. But his greatest performance was his part in the establishment of the first Moslem fleet, an honour which he shares with Mu'awiyah, the governor of Syria. Alexandria was naturally the main dockyard for the Egyptian fleet. The maritime operations, whether from Egypt under 'Abdullah or from Syria under Mu'awiyah, were directed against the Byzantines. In 649 Mu'awiyah seized Cyprus (Qubrus), another important Byzantine naval base too dangerously close to the Syrian coast for comfort. The first maritime victory was thus won for Islam and the first island was added to the Moslem state. Arwad (Aradus), close by the Syrian coast, was captured the following year. In 652 'Abdullah repulsed the superior Greek fleet off Alexandria. Two years later Rhodes was pillaged by one of Mu'awiyah's captains.<sup>2</sup> In 655 <sup>s</sup> the Syro-Egyptian fleet of Mu'awiyah and 'Abdullah destroyed the Byzantine navy of about 500 ships off the Lycian coast near Phoenix. The Emperor Constans II, who led the fight in person, barely escaped with his life. This battle, known in Arabic as dhu-al-Sawari<sup>4</sup> (that of the masts), threatened but did not destroy Byzantine naval supremacy.<sup>5</sup> Because of internal disorders the Moslems



failed to press their victory and advance against Constantinople, the chief objective. In 668 or 669 a navy of 200 ships from Alexandria ventured as far as Sicily (Siqilliyah, Siqilliyah) and pillaged it. The island had been sacked at least once before (652) under Mu'awiyah.<sup>6</sup> In Mu'awiyah and 'Abdullah Islam developed its first two admirals.<sup>7</sup>

That these naval expeditions were carried on almost in spite  
<sup>1</sup> Ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, p. 178; cf. Baladhuri, p. 223 = Hitti, p. 351.

\* A later expedition in a.h. 52 (672) is cited in Baladhuri, pp. 235-6 = Hitti, pp. 375-6. <sup>3</sup> Cf. C. H. Becker, art. " 'Abd Allah B. Sa'd", Encyclopedia of Islam.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, pp. 189-91. <sup>5</sup> Cf. below, p. 602.

• Baladhuri, p. 235 = Hitti, p. 375.

' The details about the naval operations of the period, however, are lamentably meagre in Arabic sources.

of, rather than in co-operation with, the Madinese caliphs is indicated by significant passages in the early sources. 'Umar wrote instructing 'Amr in Egypt: "Let no water intervene between me and thee, and do not camp in any place which I cannot reach riding on my mount".<sup>1</sup> 'Uthman authorized Muawiyah's expedition to Cyprus, after the latter had repeatedly emphasized the proximity of the island, only on condition that he take his wife along.<sup>2</sup>

The fall of Egypt left the Byzantine provinces bordering on its west defenceless; at the same time the continued occupation of Alexandria necessitated the conquest of those

provinces. After the first fall of Alexandria and in order to protect his rear, 'Amr, with characteristic swiftness, pushed (642-3) at the head of his cavalry westward to the neighbouring Pentapolis and occupied Barqah without any resistance. He also received the submission of the Berber tribes of Tripolis, including the Lawatah.<sup>3</sup> His successor, 'Abdullah, advanced through Tripolis and subjugated a part of Ifriqiyah whose capital Carthage (Qartajannah) paid tribute.<sup>4</sup> 'Uthman extended even to the pagan Berbers, not within the category of Scripturaries, the same privileges as those of the Dhimmah. Attempts were also made on Nubia (al-Nubah) in the south, which with its pasturage was more like Arabia and better adapted than Egypt to a nomadic mode of life. For centuries before Islam a more or less continual Arabian infiltration into Egypt and even into the Sudan had been going on. In 652 'Abdullah entered into treaty relations with the Nubians,<sup>5</sup> who were then far from being subdued. For centuries to come the Christian kingdom of Nubia, with Dongola as its capital and with a mixed population of Libyans and negroes, stood as a barrier against the farther southward onrush of Islam.

<sup>1</sup> Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 180. Fakhri, p. 114, reports that 'Umar wrote to Sa'd ibn-abi-Waqqas in al-'Iraq asking him to let no sea intervene between the caliph and the Moslems.

<sup>1</sup> Baladhuri, pp. 152-3 = Hitti, pp. 235-6.  
vol. ii, p. 179.

<sup>3</sup> Ya'qubi,

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, p. 183.

\* Baladhuri, pp. 237-8 = Hitti, pp. 370-81.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE NEW POSSESSIONS

HOW to administer such vast territories newly acquired and how to adapt the uncoded ordinances of a primitive Arabian society to the needs of a huge cosmopolitan conglomerate living under a multitude of conditions un contemplated by the original lawgiver was the great task now confronting Islam. 'Umar was the first to address himself to this problem. He is represented by tradition as the one who solved it and therefore as the founder of the second theocracy of Islam—a sort of Islamic Utopia— which, however, was not destined to last long.

'Umar made his starting-point the theory that in the peninsula itself none but the Moslem religion should ever be tolerated. To this end and in utter disregard of earlier treaties<sup>20</sup> he expelled, A.H. 14-15 (635-6), among others, the Jews of Khaybar,<sup>21</sup> who found abode in Jericho and other places, as well as the Christians of Najran, who fled to Syria and al-Traq.<sup>22 23</sup> The second cardinal point in 'Umar's policy was to organize the Arabians, now all Moslems, into a complete religio-military commonwealth with its members keeping themselves pure and unmixed—a sort of martial aristocracy—and denying the privilege of citizenship to all non-Arabians. With this in view the Arabian Moslems were not to hold or cultivate landed property outside the peninsula. In the peninsula itself the native who owned land paid a kind of a tithe (^ushr) thereon. Accordingly the Arabian conquerors in Syria first lived in camps: al-Jabiyah, Hirns, 'Amwas, Tabariyah<sup>22</sup> (for the Jordan district), and al-Ludd (Lydda) and Iateral-Ramlah for the Filastin (Palestine) district. In Egypt they settled in al-Fustat and the Alexandria camp. In al-Traq the newly built al-Kufah and al-Basrah served as headquarters.<sup>1</sup> In the conquered territories the subject peoples were left in their professions and the cultivation of the soil, occupying an inferior status and regarded as a kind of reserve for the benefit of the

Moslems fnaddat al-Mus limin')? Even when converted to Islam a nonArab was to occupy a position subsidiary to that of the Moslem Arabian.

### 'Umar's constitution

As Dhimmis,<sup>3</sup> the subject peoples would enjoy the protection of the Moslems and have no military duty to perform, since they were barred by religion from service in the Moslem army; but they would have a heavy tribute to pay. Being outside the pale of Moslem law they were allowed the jurisdiction of their own canon laws as administered by the respective heads of their religious communities. This state of partial autonomy, recognized later by the sultans of Turkey, has been retained by the Arab successor states.

When a subject was converted to Islam he was freed, according to this primitive system ascribed by tradition to 'Umar, from all tributary obligations, including what was later termed poll tax. The land tax inhered in the land whenever the land was considered fay , waqf i.e. for the whole Moslem community, and the Moslem continued to pay it. The only exception to the fay lands was constituted by those districts whose inhabitants according to tradition, voluntarily surrendered to the Arab conquerors on condition that they be allowed to retain their lands. Such districts were called dar al-sulh (the territory of capitulation). Instead of the poll tax the convert incurred a new obligation, that of the zakah (poor rate); but on the other hand he shared in the pensions and other benefits accruing to him as a Moslem.

Later developments, the result of many years of practice, were attributed by this tradition to the initiative of 'Umar. The fact is that the original part which the first caliphs and the early Moslem governors played in the imposition of taxes

and the administration of finances could not have been great. The frame-

<sup>1</sup> In the first Moslem century a number of such military cantonment arose, including 'Askar Mukram in Khuzistan, Shiraz in Faris, and Barqah and al-Qay-rawan in North Africa.

<sup>2</sup> Yahya ibn-Adam, *Kitab al-Kharaj*, ed. Juynboll (Leyden, 1896), p. 27.

' Or Ahl al-Dhimma (people of the covenant or obligation), a term first applied only to Ahl al-Kitab, i.e. the Jews, Christians and Sabians (not to be confused with Sabaeans) and later interpreted to include Zoroastrians and others.

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work of the Byzantine provincial government in Syria and Egypt was continued in Allah's name, and no radical changes were introduced into the machinery of local administration in the former Persian domains. From the very beginning taxation varied according to the nature of the soil and the system that had prevailed in that locality under the old rule, whether Byzantine or Persian; it did not necessarily depend upon the acquisition of land by capitulation (sulhan) or by force (janwatan) nor upon any legislative act on the part of 'Umar.<sup>1</sup> Conquest by capitulation and conquest by force as used to explain the variation in taxation was often a late legal fiction rather than the real cause. Likewise the distinction between jizyah as poll tax and kharaj (from Gr. choregia or Aram, keragga) as land tax had not arisen at the time of the second caliph (634—44). The two words in this early period were used interchangeably; both meant tribute in general. In the Koran the only occurrence of the word jizyah is in sur. 9 : 29, where it has in no sense a legal meaning. Kharaj occurs also only once in the Koran (23 : 74),

and then in the sense of remuneration rather than land tax. Evidently the original terms made with the conquered people were well-nigh forgotten by the time the historians began to record those events, which they interpreted in the light of later conditions and developments.

The differentiation between the two forms of taxation implied in jizyah and kharaj was not made until the time of the late Umayyads. The land tax was paid in instalments and in kind from the produce of the land and from cattle, but never in the form of wine, pigs and dead animals. The poll tax was paid in a lump sum and as an index of lower status. The latter was generally four dinars<sup>2</sup> for the well-to-do, two for the middle class and one for the poor. In addition the subject people were liable to other exactions for the maintenance of Moslem troops. These taxes applied only to the able-bodied; women, children, beggars, monks, the aged, insane and incurably sick being exempt except when any of them had an independent income.

The third principle said to have been enunciated by 'Umar in consonance with the view of his advisers among the Com-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Daniel C. Dennett, Jr., *Conversion and the Poll Tax in Early Islam* (Cambridge, Mass., 1950), p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> From Greek-Latin denarius-, the unit of gold currency in the caliphate, weighing about 4 grams. In 'Umar's time the dinar was the equivalent of 10 dirhams, later 12. panions<sup>1</sup> was that only movable property and prisoners won as booty constituted ghariimah<sup>2</sup> and belonged to the warriors as hitherto, but not the land. The land as well as all moneys received from subjects constituted fay\* and belonged to the Moslem community as a whole. Cultivators of fay\* estates continued to be bound to pay land tax even if

they adopted Islam. All such revenues were deposited in the public treasury, and whatever remained after the payment of the common expenses of administration and warfare had to be divided among the Moslems. In order to accomplish the distribution a census became necessary, the first census recorded in history for the distribution of state revenue. 'A'ishah headed the list with a pension of 12,000 dirhams<sup>4</sup> a year. After the Ahl al-Bayt (the Prophet's family) came the Emigrants and Supporters, each with a subsidy according to his precedence in the profession of the new faith. About 5000 or 4000 dirhams per annum was the average allotment to each person in this category.<sup>6</sup> At the bottom came the mass of Arabian tribes arranged in the register according to military service and knowledge of the Koran. The minimum for an ordinary warrior was 500-600 dirhams; even women, children and clients<sup>6</sup> were included in the register and received annuities ranging from 200 to 600 dirhams. This institution of the diwan (whence Fr. douane, for customhouse), or public registers of receipts and expenditures, with which 'Umar was credited was evidently borrowed from the Persian system, as ibn-al-Tiqtaqa <sup>7</sup> asserts and as the word itself (from Pers, diwan) indicates.

'Umar's military communistic constitution set up an ascendancy of Arabism and secured for the non-Arabian believer a status superior to that of the unbeliever. But it was too artificial to stand the test of time. Under 'Umar's immediate successor,

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Sa'd, vol. iii, pt. 1, p. 212.

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of ghanimah and fay see al-Mawardi, al-Ahkdm al-Sultaniyah, ed. M. Enger (Bonn, 1853), pp. 217-

45; abu-Yusuf, pp. 21-32.

<sup>3</sup> According to sur. 8 : '42, only one-fifth of the booty was the share of Allah and the Prophet, i.e. the state's, the remaining four-fifths belonged to the warriors who secured it.

<sup>4</sup> Ar. dirham (Pers, diram, from Gr. drachme), the unit of silver coinage in the Arab monetary system, had the nominal value of a pre-war French franc, about 10d. (19 cents in U.S. money), but naturally its real value varied a great deal.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn-Sa'd, vol. iii, pt. 1, pp. 213-14; Mawardi, pp. 347-8; abu-Yusuf, pp. 50-54; Baladhuri, pp. 450-51.

- Mawali, sing, mawla, a non-Arab embracing Islam and affiliating himself with an Arabian tribe. His ill-defined rank placed him below the Moslem Arabians.

<sup>T</sup> Fakhri, p. 116; cf. Mawardi, pp. 343-4.

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'Uthman, permission was given to the sons of Arabia to hold landed property in the newly conquered territories. With the lapse of years the aristocracy of the Arabians was submerged by the rising tide of the Mawali.

The army was the ummah, the whole nation, in action. Its The amir or commander in chief was the caliph in al-Madinah, who <sup>army</sup> delegated the authority to his lieutenants or generals. In the early stages the general who conquered a certain territory would also act as leader in prayer and as judge. Al-Baladhuri<sup>1</sup> tells us that Umar appointed a qadi (judge) for Damascus and the Jordan and another for Hims



and Qinnasrin. If so he was the caliph who established the institution of judgeship.<sup>2</sup>

The division of the army into centre, two wings, vanguard and rear guard was already known at Muhammad's time and betrays Byzantine and Sasanid influence. The khamis (five) was the term used for this military unit. The cavalry covered the wings. In the division the tribal unit was preserved. Each tribe had its own standard, a cloth attached to a lance, borne by one of the bravest. The Prophet's banner is said to have been the 'uqab (eagle). The infantry used bow and arrow, sling, and sometimes shield and sword; the sword was carried in a scabbard flung over the right shoulder. The harbah (javelin) was introduced later from Abyssinia. The chief weapon of the cavalry was the rumh (lance), the shafts of which, famous in Arabic literature as khatt were

- • 1 so named after al-Khatt, the coast of al-Bahrayn, where the bamboo was first grown and whither it was later imported from India. This, together with the bow and arrow, formed the two national weapons. The best swords were also made in India, whence the name hindi. The defensive armour was the coat of mail and the shield. The Arab armour was lighter than the Byzantine.<sup>8</sup>

The order of battle was primitive, in lines or rows and in compact array. Hostilities began with individual combats of distinguished champions who stepped forward out of the ranks and delivered a challenge. The Arabian warrior received higher remuneration than his Persian or Byzantine rival and was sure of a portion of the booty. Soldiering was not only the noblest and most pleasing profession in the sight of Allah but also the most

<sup>1</sup> P. 141= Hitti, p. 217.  
202,11. 27-8.

\* Ibn-Sa'd, vol. iii, pt. 1, p.

\* On Arab weapons see ibn-Qutaybah, 'Uyun, vol. i, pp. 128-32.

profitable. The strength of the Moslem Arabian army lay neither in the superiority of its arms nor in the excellence of its organization but in its higher morale, to which religion undoubtedly contributed its share; in its powers of endurance, which the desert breeding fostered; and in its remarkable mobility, due mainly to camel transport.<sup>1</sup>

The so called Arab civilization

By the conquest of the Fertile Crescent and the lands of Persia and Egypt the Arabians came into possession not only of geographical areas but of the earliest seats of civilization in the whole world. Thus the sons of the desert fell heir to these hoary cultures with their long traditions going back to Greco-Roman, Iranian, Pharaonic and Assyro-Babylonian times. In art and architecture, in philosophy, in medicine, in science and literature, in government, the original Arabians had nothing to teach and everything to learn. And what voracious appetites they proved to have! With an ever sharp sense of curiosity and with latent potentialities never aroused before, these Moslem Arabians in collaboration with and by the help of their subject peoples began now to assimilate, adapt and reproduce their intellectual and esthetic heritage. In Ctesiphon, Edessa, Nisibis, Damascus, Jerusalem and Alexandria they viewed, admired and copied the work of the architect, the artisan, the jeweller and the manufacturer. To all these centres of ancient culture they came, they saw and were conquered. Theirs was another instance in which the victor was made captive by the vanquished.

What we therefore call "Arab civilization" was Arabian neither in its origins and fundamental structure nor in

its principal ethnic aspects. The purely Arabian contribution in it was in the linguistic and to a certain extent in the religious fields. Throughout the whole period of the caliphate the Syrians, the Persians, the Egyptians and others, as Moslem converts or as Christians and Jews, were the foremost bearers of the torch of enlightenment and learning just as the subjugated Greeks were in their relation to the victorious Romans. The Arab Islamic civilization was at bottom the Hellenized Aramaic and the Iranian civilizations as developed under the aegis of the caliphate and expressed through the medium of the Arabic tongue. In another sense it was the logical continuation of the early Semitic

<sup>1</sup> For a comparison with the Byzantine army consult Charles Oman, *A History of the Art of War in the Middle Ages*. 2nd ed. (London, 1924), vol. i, pp. 208 seq.

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civilization of the Fertile Crescent originated and developed by the Assyro-Babylonians, Phoenicians, Aramaeans and Hebrews. In it the unity of the Mediterranean civilization of Western Asia found its culmination.

The conquest of the world receiving its impulse under abu-Bakr reached its high-water mark under 'Umar and came to a temporary standstill under \*Ali, whose caliphate was too clouded with internal disturbances to admit of further expansion. At the end of a single generation after the Prophet the Moslem empire had extended from the Oxus to Syrtis Minor in northern Africa. Starting with nothing the Moslem Arabian caliphate had now grown to be the strongest power of the world.

Character and achievements of the orthodox caliphs

Abu-Bakr (632-4), the conqueror and pacifier of Arabia, lived in patriarchal simplicity. In the first six months of his short reign he travelled back and forth daily from al-Sunh (where he lived in a modest household with his wife, Habibah) to his capital al-Madinah, and received no stipend since the state had at that time hardly any income.<sup>1</sup> All state business he transacted in the courtyard of the Prophet's Mosque. His personal qualities and unshaken faith in his son-in-law Muhammad, who was three years his senior, make him one of the most attractive characters in nascent Islam and have won him the title of al-Siddiq (the believer).<sup>2</sup> In character he was endowed with much more strength and forcefulness than current tradition credits to him. Physically he is represented as of fair complexion, slender build and thin countenance; he dyed his beard and walked with a stoop.<sup>3</sup>

Simple and frugal in manner, his energetic and talented successor, 'Umar (634-44), who was of towering height, strong physique and bald-headed,<sup>4</sup> continued at least for some time after becoming caliph to support himself by trade and lived throughout his life in a style as unostentatious as that of a Bedouin sheikh. In fact 'Umar, whose name according to Moslem tradition is the greatest in early Islam after that of Muhammad, has been idolized by Moslem writers for his piety, justice and patriarchal simplicity and treated as the personification of all the virtues a caliph ought to possess. His irreproach-

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Sa'd, vol. iii, pt. 1, pp. 131-2; ibn-al-Athir, *Usd al-Ghabah fi Marifat al-Sahaboh* (Cairo, 1286), vol. iii, p. 219.

<sup>1</sup> Usually translated "the veracious". But see ibn-Sa'd, vol. iii, pt. I, pp. 120-21.

• Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 157.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 185.

able character became an exemplar for all conscientious successors to follow. He owned, we are told, one shirt and one mantle only, both conspicuous for their patchwork,<sup>1</sup> slept on a bed of palm leaves and had no concern other than the maintenance of the purity of the faith, the upholding of justice and the ascendancy and security of Islam and the Arabians. Arabic literature is replete with anecdotes extolling 'Umar's stern character. He is said to have scourged his own son to death<sup>2</sup> for drunkenness and immorality. Having in a fit of anger inflicted a number of stripes on a Bedouin who came seeking his succour against an oppressor, the caliph soon repented and asked the Bedouin to inflict the same number on him. But the latter refused. So 'Umar retired to his home with the following soliloquy:

O son of al-Khattab! humble thou wert and Allah hath elevated thee; astray, and Allah hath guided thee; weak, and Allah hath strengthened thee. Then He caused thee to rule over the necks of thy people, and when one of them came seeking thy aid, thou didst strike him! What wilt thou have to say to thy Lord when thou presentest thyself before Him?<sup>3</sup>

The one who fixed the Hijrah as the commencement of the Moslem era, presided over the conquest of large portions of the then known world, instituted the state register and organized the government of the new empire met a tragic and sudden death at the very zenith of his life when he was struck down (November 3, 644) by the poisoned dagger of a Christian Persian slave<sup>4</sup> in the midst of his own congregation.

'Uthman, who committed the words of Allah to an unalterable form and whose reign saw the complete conquest of Iran, Adharbayjan and parts of Armenia, was

also a pious and wellmeaning old man, but too weak to resist the importunities of his greedy kinsfolk. His foster brother, 'Abdullah, formerly the Prophet's amanuensis, who had tampered with the words of revelation<sup>5</sup> and who was one of the ten proscribed by Muhammad at the capture of Makkah, he appointed over Egypt; his half-brother, al-Walid ibn-'Uqbah, who had spat in Muham-

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Sa'd, vol. iii, pt. I, pp. 237-9.

<sup>1</sup> Divarbakri, Tarikh al-Khamis (Cairo, 1302), vol. ii, p. 281 11. 3-4; al-Nuwayri, Nihayat al-Arab, vol. iv (Cairo, 1925), pp. 89-90.

' Ibn-al-Athir, op. cil. vol. iv, p. 61.

<sup>4</sup> Tabari, vol. i, pp. 2722-3; Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 183.

<sup>6</sup> Koran 6 : 93; Baydawi, vol. i, p. 300.

CH. XV ADMINISTRATION OF THE NEW POSSESSIONS mad's face and had been condemned by the latter, he made governor of al-Kufah; his cousin Marwan ibn-al-Hakam, a future Umayyad caliph, he put in charge of the diwan. Many important offices were filled by Umayyads, the caliph's family.<sup>1</sup> The caliph himself accepted presents from his governors or their partisans, including a beautiful maid offered by the governor of al-Basrah. Charges of nepotism became widespread. The feeling of discontent aroused by his unpopular administration was fanned by the three Qurayshite aspirants to the caliphate: 'Ali, Talhah and al-Zubayr. The uprising started in al-Kufah among \*Ali's followers and proved particularly strong in Egypt, which in April 656 sent some five hundred rebels to al-Madinah. The insurgents shut the venerable octogenarian in his residence, and whilst he read the copy of the Koran<sup>2</sup> which

he had canonized the house was stormed; Muhammad, son of abu-Bakr his friend and predecessor, broke in and laid the first violent hand upon him.<sup>3</sup> Thus fell the first caliph whose blood was shed by Moslem hands (June 17, 656). The patriarchal epoch of Islam, during which the awe inspired by the Prophet and the hallowed association connected with al-Madinah were still an active living force in the lives of the successors of Muhammad, ended in a stream of blood let loose by the struggle for the now vacant throne, first between 'Ali and his close rivals, Talhah and abZubayr, and then between \*Ali and a new aspirant, Mu'awiyah, the champion of the Umayyad cause of which the murdered 'Uthman was a representative.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Hajar, vol. iv, pp. 223-4; ibn-Sa'd, vol. iii, pt. 1, p. 44; Mas'udi, vol. iv, pp. 257 seq.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-Batjubah (J 1377), vol. ii, pp. 10-11, claims that when he visited al-Ba'rah its mosque still preserved 'Uthman's copy of the Koran with his blood staining the page on which occurs sur. 2 : 131, where according to ibn-Sa'd, vol. iii, pt. I, p. 52, the flowing blood of the wounded caliph stopped. See Quatremere in Journalasiatique, ser. 3, vol. vi (1838), pp. 41-5.

\* Ibn-Sa'd, vol. iii, pt. I, p. 51.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN 'ALI AND MU A.WIYAH FOR THE CALIPHATE

#### The elective caliphate

Abu-Bakr, one of the earliest supporters and staunchest friends of Muhammad, whose alter ego he was and who had

conducted the public prayers during the last illness of the Prophet, was designated (June 8, 632) Muhammad's successor by some form of election in which those leaders present at the capital, al-Madinah, took part. He was to assume all those duties and privileges of the Prophet with the exception of such as related to his prophetic office—which had ceased with Muhammad's death.

The designation khalifat Rasül Allah (the successor of the Messenger of Allah), applied in this case to abu-Bakr, may not have been used by him as a title. The term khalifah occurs only twice in the Koran (2 : 28, 38 : 25); in neither case does it seem to have any technical significance or to carry any indication that it was intended to be applied to the successor of Muhammad.

'Umar, the logical candidate after abu-Bakr, was designated by the latter as his successor and is said at first to have used the title with the designation khalifat khalifat (the caliph of the caliph of) Rasül Allah, which proved too long and was consequently abbreviated.<sup>1</sup> The second caliph (634-44) is credited with being the first to bear in his capacity as commander in chief of the Moslem armies the distinctive title amir al-mu minin (commander of the believers), the "Miramolin" of Christian medieval writers. Before his death 'Umar is represented as having nominated a board of six electors: 'Ali ibn-abi-Tâlib, 'Uthman ibn-'Afian, al-Zubayr ibn-al-'Awwam, Talhah ibn-'Abdullâh, Sa'd ibn-abi-Waqqâs and 'Abd-al-Rahman ibn-'Awf,<sup>2</sup> with the stipulation that his own son be not elected to succeed him. The constitution of this board called al-Shûra (consultation), including the oldest and most distinguished

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Sa'd, vol. iii, pt. 1, p. 202.  
pp. 245 seq.

\* Ibid. vol. iii, pt. I,



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Companions surviving, showed that the ancient Arabian idea of a tribal chief had triumphed over that of the hereditary monarch.

In the case of the third caliph, 'Uthman (644), seniority again determined his election over 'Ali. 'Uthman represented the Umayyad aristocracy as against his two predecessors who represented the Emigrants. None of these caliphs founded a dynasty.

Subsequent to the murder of 'Uthman, 'Ali was proclaimed the fourth caliph at the Prophet's Mosque in al-Madinah on June 24, 656. Practically the whole Moslem world acknowledged his succession. The new caliph was the first cousin of Muhammad, the husband of his favourite daughter, Fatimah, the father of his only two surviving male descendants, al-Hasan and al-Husayn, and either the second or third to believe in his prophethood. He was affable, pious and valiant. The party he represented, *ahī al-nass w-al-ta yzn*<sup>24</sup> (people of divine ordinance and designation = the legitimists), had stoutly averred that from the beginning Allah and His Prophet had clearly designated 'Ali as the only legitimate successor but that the first three caliphs had cheated him out of his rightful office.

'Ali's first problem was to dispose of his two rivals to the high office he had just assumed, Talhah and al-Zubayr, who represented the Makkan party. Both Talhah and al-Zubayr<sup>25</sup> had followers in al-Hijaz and al-'Iraq who refused to acknowledge 'Ali's successorship. 'A'ishah, the most beloved wife of the Prophet and now "the mother of the believers", who had connived at the insurrection against 'Uthman, now joined the ranks of the insurgents against 'Ali at al-Basrah. The youthful 'A'ishah, who had married so young<sup>26</sup> that she brought toys with her from her father's (abu-Bakr's) home,

hated 'Ali with all the bitterness of a wounded pride; for once, when she loitered behind the caravan of her husband, he had suspected her fidelity until Allah intervened in her favour through a revelation (sur. 24 : 11-20). Outside of al-Basrah on December 9, 656, 'Ali met and defeated the coalition in a battle styled "the battle of the camel", after the camel on which 'A'ishah rode, which was the i8o RISE OF ISLAM AND THE CALIPHAL STATE PART II rallying-point for the rebel warriors. Both rivals of 'Ali fell; he magnanimously mourned the fallen and had them honourably buried.<sup>1</sup> 'A'ishah was captured and treated most considerately and in a manner befitting her dignity as the "first lady" of the land. She was sent back to al-Madinah. Thus came to an end the first, but by no means the last, encounter in which Moslem stood against Moslem in battle array. The dynastic wars that were to convulse Islam from time to time and occasionally shake it to its very foundation had just begun.

Ostensibly secure on his throne, 'Ali from his new capital al-Kūfah inaugurated his regime by dismissing most of the provincial governors appointed by his predecessor and exacting the oath of fealty from the others. With one of them, Mu'âwiyah ibn-abi-Sufyân, governor of Syria and kinsman of 'Uthmân, he did not reckon. Mu'âwiyah now came out as the avenger of the martyred caliph. He exhibited in the Damascus mosque the blood-stained shirt of the murdered ruler and the fingers cut from the hand of his wife Nâ'ilah as she tried to defend him.<sup>2</sup> With the tactics and eloquence of an Antony he endeavoured to play on Moslem emotions. Withholding his homage from 'Ali, Mu'âwiyah tried to corner him with this dilemma: Produce the assassins of the duly appointed successor of the Prophet or accept the position of an accomplice who is thereby disqualified from the caliphate. The issue, however, was more than a personal one, it transcended individual and even family affairs. The real question was whether àl-Kūfah or Damascus,

al-'Iraq or Syria, should be supreme in Islamic affairs. Al-Madinah, which 'Ali had left soon after his installation in 656 never to revisit, was already out of the way. The weight of the far-flung conquests had shifted the centre of gravity to the north.

On the plain of Siffin south of al-Raqqah, on the west bank of the Euphrates, the two armies finally stood face to face: 'Ali with an army reported to have comprised 50,000 'Irâqis and Mu'âwiyah with his Syrians. In a half-hearted manner, for neither side was anxious to precipitate a final decision, the skirmishes dragged on for weeks. The final encounter took place on July 28. 657. Under the leadership of Mâlik al-Ashtar, 'Ali's forces were on the point of victory when the shrewd, wily 'Amr

<sup>1</sup> A town bearing his name has grown around the tomb of al-Zubayr.

<sup>2</sup> Fakhri, pp. 125, 137.

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ibn-al-\*As, Mu'âwiyah's leader, resorted to a ruse. Copies of the Koran fastened to lances were suddenly seen thrust in the air\_\_

a gesture interpreted to mean an appeal from the decision of arms to the decision of the Koran. Hostilities ceased. Urged by his followers, the simple-hearted 'Ali accepted Muawiyah's proposal to arbitrate the case and thus spare Moslem blood. The arbitration was, of course, to be "according to the word of Allah"<sup>1</sup>—whatever that may have meant.

Against his better judgment the caliph appointed as his personal representative abu-Müsa al-Ash'ari, a man of

undoubted piety but of lukewarm loyalty to the 'Alid cause. Mu'âwiyah matched him with 'Amr ibn-al-'As, who has been dubbed a political genius of the Arabs.<sup>2</sup> Armed each with a written document giving him full authorization to act and accompanied by four hundred witnesses each, the two arbiters (sing, hakam) held their public session in January 659 at Adhruh on the main caravan route between al-Madīnah and Damascus and half-way between Ma'ân and Petra. ■

Exactly what transpired at this historical conference is difficult to ascertain. Various versions appear in different sources.<sup>3</sup> The current tradition is that the two umpires agreed to depose both principals, thus clearing the way for a “dark horse”; but after the elder of the two, abu-Mūsa, had stood up and declared the caliphate of his master null and void, 'Amr betrayed his colleague and confirmed Mu'âwiyah. But the critical studies of Père Lammens,<sup>4</sup> preceded by those of Wellhausen,<sup>5</sup> tend to show that this tradition reflects the view of the 'Iraqi school, to which most of our extant sources belong, which flourished under the 'Abbāsids—the Umayyads' mortal enemies. What probably happened was that both referees deposed both principals, which left 'Ali the loser. Mu'âwiyah had no caliphate to be deposed from. He was but a governor of a province. The very fact of the arbitration itself had raised him to a level equivalent to that of 'Ali, whose position was thereby lowered to that of a mere pretender. The sentence of the judges deprived 'Ali of a real

<sup>1</sup> For the arbitration document see Dinawari, pp. 206-8.

<sup>2</sup> Mas'ûdi, vol. iv, p. 391. See below, p. 196. Cf. above, p. 161.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Tabari, vol. i, pp. 3340-60; Mas'üdi, vol. iv, pp. 392-402; Ya'qûbi, vol. ii, pp. 220-22; Fakhri, pp. 127-30.

<sup>4</sup> Études sur le régné du calife omaiyade Mo' âwia I<sup>er</sup> (Beirût, 1907). ch. vii.

& Das arabische Reich und sein Sturz (Berlin, 1902), ch. ii = The Arab Kingdom and its Fall, tr. Margaret G. Weir (Calcutta 1927), ch. ii.

office, and Mu'awiyah of a fictitious claim which he had not yet dared publicly to assert. Not until 'Ali's death in 661, two years after the curtain had been lowered on the arbitration farce, did Mu'awiyah's caliphate receive general recognition

The acceptance of the principle of arbitration proved disastrous to 'Ali in more than one way: it alienated the sympathy of a large body of his own followers. These Kharijites<sup>1</sup> (seceders), as they were called, the earliest sect of Islam, proved his deadly foes. Adopting as a slogan *la hukma ilia li-l-Lah*? (arbitration belongs to Allah alone), they rose in arms to the number of 4000<sup>8</sup> under the leadership of 'Abdullah ibn-Wahb al-Rasibi. On the bank of the Nahrawan canal 'Ali attacked their camp (659) and almost annihilated them, but they rose again under various names and remained a thorn in the side of the caliphate till the 'Abbasid period.

Early on January 24, 661, as 'Ali was on his way to the mosque at al-Kufah he was struck on the forehead with a poisoned sabre. The weapon, which penetrated to the brain, was wielded by a Kharijite, 'Abd-al-Rahman ibn-Muljam, who was actuated by the desire to avenge certain relatives of a lady, a friend of his, who were slaughtered at Nahrawan. Tradition makes ibn-Muljam one of three accomplices who under oath at al-Ka'bah had concocted a plan to rid the

Moslem community on the same day of its three disturbing elements: 'Ali, Mu'awiyah and 'Amr ibn-al-'As<sup>4</sup>—all of which sounds too dramatic to be true. The lonely spot near al-Kufah where \*Ali was interred,<sup>5</sup> the present Mashhad 'Ali in al-Najaf, has developed into one of the great centres of pilgrimage in Islam.

To his Shi'ite partisans the fourth caliph soon became preeminently the saint of the sect, the Wali (friend and vicegerent) of Allah, just as Muhammad had been the Prophet of Islam and the Messenger of Allah. \*Ali dead proved more effective than 'Ali living. As a canonized martyr he retrieved at once more

<sup>1</sup> Also called Haruriyah, from Harura' (Harawra' in Yaqut, vol. ii, p. 246).

<sup>1</sup> Fakhri, p. 130. Cf. Koran, 12 : 70. ' 12,000 in Shahrastani, p. 86.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Dinawari, p. 227; Tabari, vol. i, pp. 3456 seq.', H. Zotenberg, Chronique de Tabari, vol. iii (Paris, 1871), pp. 706 seq.

<sup>6</sup> The site, as the Shi'ite tradition asserts, was chosen in accordance with the dying wish of 'Ali, who ordered that his corpse be put on a loose camel and buried wherever the camel knelt. The place was kept secret until Harun al-Rashid in 791 fell upon it by chance. For the first detailed account of the tomb see ibn-Hawqal, al-Masalik iv-al-Mamalik, ed. de Goeje (Leyden, 1872), p. 163.

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than he had lost in a lifetime. Though lacking in those traits that constitute a leader and a politician, viz. alertness, foresight, resolution, expediency, he still possessed the

qualities of an ideal Arabian. Valiant in battle, wise in counsel, eloquent in speech, true to his friends, magnanimous to his foes, he became both the paragon of Moslem nobility and chivalry (jutuwali) and the Solomon of Arabic tradition, around whose name poems, proverbs, sermonettes and anecdotes innumerable have clustered. He had a swarthy complexion, large black eyes, bald head, thick and long white beard, and was corpulent and of medium stature.<sup>1</sup> His sabre dhu-al-Faqar (the cleaver of vertebrae), wielded by the Prophet on the memorable battlefield of Badr, has been immortalized in the words of the verse found engraved on many medieval Arab swords: La sayfa ilia dhu-al-Faqari wala fata ilia 'AH = "No sword can match dhu-al-Faqar, and no young warrior can compare with 'Ali!" The later Fityan movement, which developed ceremonies and insignia savouring of medieval European chivalry and the modern Scout movements, took 'Ali for its first Fata and model. Regarded as wise and brave by all the Islamic world, as idealistic and exemplary by many Fityan and dervish fraternities, as sinless and infallible by his partisans and even held to be the incarnation of the deity by the Ghulah (extremists) among them, he whose worldly career was practically a failure has continued to exert a posthumous influence second only to that of the Prophet himself. The throngs of pilgrims that still stream to his mashhad at al-Najaf and to that of his son al-Husayn, the Shl'ah arch-saint and martyr at near-by Karbala', and the passion play enacted annually on the tenth of Muharram throughout the Shl'ah world testify to the possibility that death may avail a Messiah more than life.

With the death of \* Ali (661) what may be termed the republican Periods

to an end. The four caliphs of this era are known to Arab historians as al-Rashidun (orthodox). The founder of

the second caliphate, Mu'awiyah the Umayyad, a man of the world, nominated his own son Yazid as his successor and thus became the founder of a dynasty. The hereditary principle was thereby introduced into the caliphal succession never thereafter to be entirely

<sup>1</sup> Mas'udi, Tanbih, p. 297.

abandoned. The Umayyad caliphate was the first dynasty (mu lk} in the history of Islam. The fiction of election was preserved in the bay ah<sup>x</sup> (literally "sale"), the ceremony by which the leaders of the people literally or figuratively took the hand of the new caliph as a sign of homage. The Umayyad caliphate (661-750) with its capital at Damascus was followed by the 'Abbasid (750-1258) at Baghdad. The Fatimid caliphate (909-1171), whose main seat was Cairo, was the only Shi'ite one of primary importance. Another Umayyad caliphate at Cordova (Qurtubah) in Spain lasted from 929 to 1031. The last great caliphate of Islam was non-Arab, that of the Ottoman Turks in Constantinople (ca. 1517-1924). In November 1922 the Grand National Assembly at Ankara declared Turkey a republic, deposed the Sultan-Caliph Muhammad VI and made his cousin 'Abd-al-Majid caliph, denying him the sultanate. In March 1924 the caliphate itself was abolished.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khaldun, Muqaddamah, i.e. vol. i of Kitab al- I bar wa-Diwan al-Mubtada w-al-Khobar (Cairo, 1284), pp. 174-5 = PP- 376-7 of Quatremere's ed., in Notices et extraits etc., vol. xvi (Paris, 1858), and pp. 424-6 of de Slane's tr., vol. xix (Paris, 1862).

- The subjoined tree shows the connection of the lines of caliphs:

Quraysh



r

Hashim

I .

\*Abd-al - M u[t alib

, \_\_\_\_\_ |

. . | |

Umar abu-Bakr ‘Abdullah abu-r

‘Abd-Manäf

I

“—|

älib al-‘Abbäs

7 I

‘Abd-Shams

I Umayyah

I

I

Umayyad Caliphs 661-750 929-1031

Hafsah ‘Ä’ishah + Muhammad 4-

‘Abbasid Caliphs

750-1258

Muhammad

I : . . . .

Uthman + Ruqayyah Fätimah + Ali

I al-Husayn 'I The I marna

Fätimid Caliphs

909-1171

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We should here guard against the common fallacy that the The caliphate was a religious office. In this regard analogies drawn «caliph<sup>h</sup>tte» from the headship of the Holy Roman Empire and from the emin'entiy modern Christian distinction between the spheres of temporal and religious powers are misleading. As amir al-mu minIn, commander of the believers, the military office of the caliph was emphasized. As imam (leader in public prayer) the caliph could and did lead the religious service and pronounce the Friday khutbah (sermon); but this was a function which the humblest of Moslems could perform. Succession to Muhammad (khilafah') meant succession to the sovereignty of the state. Muhammad as a prophet, as an instrument of revelation, as a messenger (rasul} of Allah, could have no successor. The caliph's relation to religion was merely that of a guardian. He defended the faith just as any European emperor was supposed to do, suppressed heresies, warred against unbelievers and extended the boundaries of the Dar al-Islam (the abode of Islam), in the performance of all of which he employed the power of his secular arm.<sup>27</sup>

Later theoretical legists, flourishing mostly in Makkah, al-Madinah and other centres, and out of touch with the course

of events in the Islamic capitals of Damascus, Baghdad and Cairo, worked out nicely-drawn qualifications, privileges and functions said to pertain to the caliph. Al-Mawardi<sup>28</sup> (f 1058) in his utopian treatise on politics, al-Nasafi (j\* 1310), ibn-Khaldun (f 1406) in his famous critical prolegomena<sup>29</sup> and later writers representing the Sunnite (orthodox) theory list the following caliphal qualifications: membership in the Quraysh family; being male and adult; soundness of body and mind; courage, energy and other traits of character necessary for the defence of the realm; and the winning of the allegiance of the community by an act of bay ah. The Shfah, on the other hand, who make less of the caliphate and more of the imamate, confine the office to the family of 'Ali, who they hold was nominated by Muhammad as his successor on the basis of a divine ordinance (nass) and whose qualifications passed on to his descendants preordained for the high office by Allah.<sup>4</sup> Among the caliphal functions according to the Sunnite school are: protection and main-

tenance of the faith and the territory of Islam (particularly the two sacred places—al-haramayn—of Makkah and al-Madinah) and in case of necessity the declaration of a holy war (Jihad}\ appointment of state officials; collection of taxes and administration of public funds; punishment of wrongdoing and the execution of justice.<sup>1</sup> The privileges include the mention of the caliph's name in the Friday khutbah and on the coinage; the wearing of the burdah (the Prophet's mantle) on important state occasions; the custody of such holy relics as the staff, seal, shoe, tooth and hair that are said to have been Muhammad's.<sup>2</sup>

Not until the latter part of the eighteenth century did the notion prevail in Europe that the Moslem caliph was a kind of pope with spiritual jurisdiction over the followers of

Muhammad throughout the world. In his *Tableau général de l'empire ottoman* (Paris, 1788),<sup>3</sup> d'Ohsson, a Constantinople Armenian, was one of the first to give currency to this fallacy. The shrewd \*Abd-al-Hamīd II made capital of the idea to strengthen his prestige in the eyes of the European powers who had by this time come to dominate most of the Moslems in Asia and Africa. An ill-defined movement had its inception in the latter part of the last century and under the name pan-Islamism {al-Jamī'ah al-Islāmīyah) exerted special effort to bring about some unity of action to oppose the Christian powers. With Turkey as its rallying-point it unduly stressed the ecumenical character of the caliphate.

<sup>1</sup> Mâwardī, pp. 23-4; al-Nasafī, \*Umdat 'Aqīdat Ahl al-Sunnah, ed. W. Cureton (London, 1843), PP- 28-9.

<sup>1</sup> As the last Moslem caliphs the Ottoman sultans had charge of these Prophetic treasures (dhakha'ir Nabawiyah), which Sultan Salim in 1517 brought to Constantinople upon his return from the conquest of Egypt. The relics have ever since been enshrined in a special pavilion within the stronghold of the Grand Seraglio and cherished as the priceless insignia of the exalted office of the caliphate.

\* Vol. i, pp. 213 seq.

## PART III

## THE Umayyad and 'Abbasid Empires

### CHAPTER XVII

#### THE Umayyad Caliphate: Mu'awiyah Establishes a Dynasty

Quraysh

'Abd-Man?Lf

Hashim

I

\* Abd - al - M u t ^ ali b

\*Abd-Shams I Umayyah

Abu	-al-'A? 1 . t	Harb
1 Al-Hakam ' 1	1 ■ Affan 1	Abu-Sufyan 1
1 Marwan	1 'Uthman	1 Mu'awiyah

conviction. The interests of al-Hasan, who was more at home in the harem than on the throne, lay in fields other than those of imperial administration. It was not long before he abdicated in favour of his more able rival and retired to al-Madinah to a life of ease and pleasure, a step which he was induced to take by Mu'âwiyah's guarantee of a magnificent subsidy and pension<sup>30</sup> which he himself had fixed and which

included five million dirhams from the Küfah treasury<sup>31</sup> plus the revenue of a district in Persia for the duration of his lifetime. Though he died at the age of forty-five (ca. 669), possibly poisoned<sup>32</sup> because of some harem intrigue, al-Hasan is said to have made and unmade no less than a hundred marriages, which earned him the title of mitlaq\* (great divorcer). The Shi'ah laid the fatal act at Mu'âwiyah's door and thus made al-Hasan a shahid (martyr), in fact the "sayyid [lord] of all martyrs".

His younger brother al-Husayn, who had also lived in retirement at al-Madinah throughout the rule of Mu'âwiyah, in 680 refused to acknowledge Mu'âwiyah's son and successor Yazid, and in response to the urgent and reiterated appeals of the 'Iraqis, who had declared him the legitimate caliph after al-Hasan and 'Ali, started at the head of a weak escort of relatives (including his harem and devoted followers) for al-Küfah. 'Ubaydullâh, whose father Ziyad had been conveniently acknowledged by Mu'âwiyah as his brother, was now the Umayyad governor of al-'Irâq and had established outposts on all the roads leading from al-Hijâz to al-Traq. On the tenth of Muharram, A.H. 61 (October 10, 680), 'Umar, son of the distinguished general Sa'd ibn-abi-Waqqâs, in command of 4000 troops surrounded al-Husayn with his insignificant band of some two hundred souls at Karbala', about twenty-five miles north-west of al-Kûfah, and upon their refusal to surrender cut them down. The grandson of the Prophet fell dead with many wounds and his head was sent to Yazid in Damascus. The head was given back to al-Husayn's sister and son, who had gone with it to Damascus,<sup>5</sup> and was buried with the body in Karbala\*. In commemoration of al-Husayn's "martyrdom" the Shi'ah Moslems have established the practice of annually observing the first ten days of Muharram as days of lamentation, and have developed a

passion play stressing his “heroic” struggle and suffering. This annual passion play is enacted in two parts, one called 'Ashura (the tenth day) in al-Kazimayn (close by Baghdad) in memory of the\* battle, and the other forty days after the tenth of Muharram in Karbala' entitled “the Return of the Head”.

The blood of al-Husayn, even more than that of his father, proved to be the seed of the Shi'ite “church”. Shi'ism was born on the tenth of Muharram. From now on the imamship in 'Ali's progeny became as much of a dogma in the Shi'ite creed as that of the prophethood of Muhammad in Islam. Yawm (the day of) Karbala gave the Shi'ah a battle-cry summed up in the formula “vengeance for al-Husayn”, which ultimately proved one of the factors that undermined the Umayyad dynasty. In the other camp the Sunnites argued that Yazid was de facto ruler and that to question his authority constituted a treason punishable with death. They insisted that the Shi'ites should not view the facts otherwise. But how a people actually do view an event is usually more important as a moving force in history than how they should view it. The great schism was made in Islam and the breach has never since been filled.

Although the Umayyads were for some time secure in the caliphate in so far as the 'Alids were concerned, the struggle was in reality three-cornered, for the third party was not yet eliminated. As long as the powerful Mu'awiyah lived 'Abdullah, a nephew of 'A'ishah and son of al-Zubayr who had fruitlessly disputed the caliphate with 'Ali, kept his peace in al-Madinah. When Yazid, well known for his frivolity and dissipation, succeeded to the throne 'Abdullah declared openly against the new caliph and encouraged al-Husayn to undertake the perilous step which cost him his life and left 'Abdullah the sole claimant. All al-Hijaz proclaimed 'Abdullah. Yazid was quick to dispatch against the

malcontents of al-Madinah a disciplinary force which included many Christian Syrians, and was headed by the oneeyed Muslim ibn-'Uqbah, whose old age and infirmity necessitated his carriage all the way in a litter. The punitive expedition encamped on the volcanic plain of al-Harrah east of al-Madinah, gave battle on August 26, 683, and was victorious. The story of the three days in which the unchecked Damascene soldiery sacked the city of the Prophet is apocryphal. The army then proceeded to Makkah. On the way Muslim died and was succeeded in the chief command by al-Husayn ibn-Numayr al-Saküni,<sup>1</sup> who had his catapults rain stones upon the Haram (holy mosque) of Makkah on whose inviolable soil ibn-al-Zubayr had taken refuge. In the course of the siege the Ka'bah itself caught fire and was burned to the ground. The Black Stone was split in three pieces and the house of Allah looked "like the torn bosoms of mourning women".<sup>2</sup> While these operations were proceeding Yazid had died and ibn-Numayr, fearing consequent disorders in Syria, suspended on November 27, 683, the operations which had begun on September 24. The second civil war of Islam, which like the first between 'Ali and Mu'awiyah was also a dynastic war, came to a temporary halt.

Subsequent to the death of his rival and the consequent withdrawal of enemy troops from Arabian soil ibn-al-Zubayr was proclaimed caliph not only in al-Hijaz, where he had his seat, and in al-Traq, where his brother Mus'ab was made his representative, but in South Arabia, Egypt and parts of Syria. Over Damascus, however, al-Dahhak ibn-Qays al-Fihri, leader of the Qaysite (North Arabian) party which had favoured ibn-al-Zubayr, had been appointed by this caliph provisional regent. Al-Dahhâk was finally crushed in July 684, at Marj Râhit<sup>3</sup> —a second Siffin for the Umayyads—by his Kalbite (including the Yamanite or South Arabian)



opponents, who supported the aged<sup>4</sup> Umayyad Marwân ibn-al-Hakam. The Kalbites were Syro-Arabs domiciled in Syria before the Hijrah and mostly Christianized. Marwân (684-5), the cousin of 'Uthmân and formerly his secretary of state, then became the founder of the Marwânid branch of the Umayyad dynasty. He followed Muawiyah II (683-4), Yazîd's weak and sickly son, who had ruled

<sup>1</sup> Tabari, vol. i, p. 2220; Ya'qûbi, vol. ii, p. 299.

\* Tabari, vol. ii, p. <427; al-Fâkihi, *abMunlaqa fi Akhbâr umm-al-Qura*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld (Leipzig, 1859), pp. 18 seq.-, Azraqi, *Akhbâr Makkah*, p. 32. The Ka'bah was rebuilt by ibn-al-Zubayr on the withdrawal of the Umayyad army.

<sup>3</sup> A plain east of the village Marj 'Adhra' not far from Damascus. See \*Iqd, vol. ii, pp. 320-21; Mas'Qdi, vol. v, p. 201. These internal feuds between the Qays, representing the new emigrants from North Arabia, and the Kalb, who were ever the staunch supporters of the Umayyad cause, were among the events which precipitated the fall of the Umayyad dynasty. The Qaysi and Yamani parties figured even in the modern politics of Lebanon and Syria. See below, p. 281.

<sup>4</sup> Ya'qûbi, vol. ii, p. 304, l. 19.

only three months and left no successor.<sup>1</sup> But the defection of al-Hijaz under the rival caliph continued until Marwân's son and successor, <sup>e</sup>Abd-al-Malik, sent his iron-handed general al-Hajjâj, formerly a schoolmaster in al-Ta'if, at the head of a Syrian army which gave the coup de grâce to the anti-caliphate. Beginning March 25, 692, al-Hajjaj pressed the siege against Makkah for six and a half months and used his catapults effectively.<sup>2</sup> Inspired by the heroic exhortation

of his mother, Asma', daughter of abu-Bakr and sister of 'A'ishah, ibn-al-Zubayr fought valiantly but hopelessly until he was slain. His head was sent to Damascus<sup>4</sup> and his body, after hanging for some time on the gibbet, was delivered to his aged mother. With the death of ibn-al-Zubayr the last champion of the old faith passed away. 'Uthman was fully avenged, if not by Muslim certainly by al-Hajjâj. The Ansar's (Supporters') power was for ever broken. After this debacle a number of them began to leave Makkah and al-Madinah to join the armies operating in North Africa, Spain and other theatres of war. Henceforth the history of Arabia begins to deal more with the effect of the outer world on the peninsula and less with the effect of the peninsula on the outer world. The vigour of the mother "island" had spent itself.

After gaining supremacy over the opposing parties Mu'âwiyah Mu'âwiyah (661-80) was free to direct his efforts against the great enemy of Islam to the north-west, the Byzantines. In 'Akka (Acre) he sovereign found soon after the conquest of Syria well-equipped Byzantine shipyards (sing, dâr al-sina ah, whence Eng. arsenal) which he utilized for building the Moslem navy. These dockyards were

<sup>1</sup> The subjoined tree shows the Sufyânîd branch of the Umayyad dynasty in its relation to the founder of the Marwânîd branch:

U mayyah

Abu-al-'A?

Harb

Al-Ilakam

Abu-Sufyan

1. Mu'awiyah (661-80)

2. Yazid I (680-83)

4. Marwan I (6S4-5)

3. Mu'awiyah II (683-4)

\* Dinawari, p. 320; ibn-'Asâkir, vol. iv, p. 50.

• Tabari, vol. ii, pp. 845-8.

<sup>4</sup> Tabari, vol. ii, p. 852.

probably the second after those of Egypt in Islamic maritime history. The Syrian yards, according to al-Baladhuri,<sup>1</sup> were transferred by later Umayyads to Sur (Tyre),<sup>2</sup> where they remained until the 'Abbasid period. This fleet must undoubtedly have been manned by Greco-Syrians accustomed to seafaring. The Arabians of al-Hijaz, the mainstay of Islam, had only little acquaintance with the sea, for it was a principle of 'Umar's policy to let no body of water intervene between him and his lieutenants. Such a policy explains, for instance, why 'Umar would not authorize the proposed invasion of Cyprus (Qubrus) by Mu'awiyah. It was 'Umar's successor, 'Uthman, who was finally persuaded to yield a half-hearted assent to the invasion of the island; and it was in compliance with the caliph's order that Mu'awiyah had his wife accompany him (649)? Her presence was proof positive of the proximity of Cyprus and of the contemplated ease with which it could be subdued.

Mu'awiyah's reign witnessed not only the consolidation but the extension of the territories of the caliphate. To this period belongs the expansion in North Africa for which 'Uqbah ibn-Nafi' was in the main responsible. In the east the complete conquest of Khurasan was undertaken (663-71)

from al-Basrah,<sup>4</sup> the Oxus was crossed and Bukhara in far-away Turkestan raided (674). Thus Mu'awiyah became not only the father of a dynasty but the second founder of the caliphate after 'Umar.

In securing his throne and extending the limits of Islamic dominion, Mu'awiyah relied mainly upon Syrians, who were still chiefly Christian, and upon the Syro-Arabs, who were mainly Yamanites, to the exclusion of the new Moslem immigrants from al-Hijaz. Arabic chronicles dwell upon the sense of loyalty which the people of Syria cherished towards their new chief.<sup>5</sup> Though as a soldier he was certainly inferior to 'Ali, as a military organizer Mu'awiyah was second to none of his contemporaries. He whipped the raw material which constituted his Syrian army into the first ordered and disciplined force known in Islamic warfare. He rid the military machine of its archaic tribal organization, a relic of the ancient patriarchal days. He abolished many

× P. 118 = Hitti, p. 181.

' Consult Guy Le Strange, *Palestine under the Moslems* (Boston, 1890), p. 342; cf. ibn-Jubayr, *Rihlah* (Leyden, 1907), p. 305. <sup>3</sup> Above, p. 168.

<sup>4</sup> Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 258; Baladhuri, p. 410; Tabari, vol. ii, pp. 166 seq.

• Tabari, vol.i, pp. 3409-10; Mas'udi, vol. v, pp. 80, 104; *ci.lqd*, vol.i,p.207,1.31.

traditional features of the government and on the earlier Byzantine framework built a stable, well-organized state. Out of seeming chaos he developed an orderly Moslem society. Historians credit him with being the first in Islam to institute the bureau of registry and the first to interest

himself in postal service, al-barid? which developed under 'Abd-al-Malik into a well-organized system knitting together the various parts of the far-flung empire. From among many other wives he chose as his favourite a Syro-Arab Kalbite of the banu-Bahdal, Maysun by name, who scorned court life at Damascus and yearned for the freedom of the desert. The verses attributed to her, though she may never have composed them, express the feeling of homesickness which many Bedouins who were now passing into an urban state must have experienced.?

Maysun was a Jacobite Christian like her predecessor Na'ilah, 'Uthman's wife, who also belonged to the Kalb tribe. She often took her son Yazid, subsequently the successor of Mu'awiyah, to the badiyah (Syrian desert), particularly to Palmyra, in which her Bedouin tribe roamed and where the youthful crown prince became habituated to the chase, hard-riding, wine-bibbing and verse-making. Al-Badiyah from this time on became the school of the Umayyad princes, where they acquired the pure Arabic<sup>3</sup> unadulterated with Aramaicisms and where they also escaped the recurrent city plagues. Later Umayyad caliphs, including 'Abd-al-Malik and al-Walid II, continuing the tradition, built country residences on the border of the Syrian desert and called them "al-Badiyahs".

Mansur ibn-Sarjun (Gr. Sergius),<sup>4</sup> who figured in the treacherous surrender of Damascus at the time of the Arab invasion, was the scion of a prominent Christian family some of whose members had occupied the position of financial controller of the state in the last Byzantine period. Next to the supreme command of the army this office became the most important in the Arab government. The grandson of this Mansur was the illustrious St. John (Yuhanna) the Damascene, who in his

<sup>1</sup> Fakhri, p. 148. See below, p. 322.

<sup>1</sup> Abu-al-Fida', vol. i, p. 203; Nicholson, Literary History, p. 195.

' 'Iqd, vol. i, p. 293, 1. 30.

<sup>4</sup> For the confusion in the Arabic chronicles between the name of this man and his son Sarjun ibn-Manşur, consult Tabari, vol. ii, pp. 205, 228, 239; Mas'udi, Tanbih, pp. 302, 306, 307, 312; cf. Theophanes, p. 365.

## ig6 THE Umayyad AND 'Abbasid Empires part III

youth was a boon companion of Yazid. The caliph's physician, ibn-Uthāl, was likewise a Christian, whom Mu'awiyah made financial administrator of the province of Hims<sup>33 34</sup> an unprecedented appointment for a Christian in Moslem annals.<sup>8</sup> The Umayyad poet laureate, al-Akhtal, another boon companion of Yazid, belonged to the Taghlib Christian Arabs of al-Hirah and was a friend of St. John. This poet of the court would enter the caliphal palace with a cross dangling from his neck and recite his poems to the delight of the Moslem caliph and his entourage. Jacobites and Maronites brought their religious disputes before the caliph,<sup>35</sup> who is reported by Theophanis<sup>36</sup> to have even rebuilt a Christian church in Edessa which had been demolished by an earthquake.

When in 679 Mu'awiyah nominated his son Yazid as his successor<sup>37</sup> and caused deputations to come from the provinces and take the oath of allegiance, he introduced into the caliphate the hereditary principle followed thereafter by the leading Moslem dynasties, including the 'Abbasids. Following this precedent the reigning caliph would proclaim as his successor the one among his sons or kinsmen whom

he considered most competent and would exact for him an anticipatory oath of fealty, first from the capital and then from the other principal towns of the empire.

No small measure of the success of the Caliph Mu'awiyah should be attributed to the circle of collaborators with whom he surrounded himself, particularly 'Amr ibn-al-'As, the vicegerent over fertile Egypt, al-Mughirah ibn-Shu'bah, the governor of turbulent al-Kufah, and Ziyad ibn-Abih, the ruler of malcontent al-Basrah. These three with their chief, Mu'awiyah, constituted the four political geniuses (duhat) of the Arab Moslems. Ziyad was at first styled ibn-Abih because of the doubt which clouded the identity of his father. His mother was a slave and prostitute in al-Ta'if whom abu-Sufyan, Mu'awiyah's father, had known. Ziyad was pro-'Alid. In a critical moment Mu'awiyah acknowledged Ziyad as his legitimate brother.® Ziyad proved a great asset to his caliph brother. His unrelenting hand weighed heavily over al-Basrah, a centre of Shi'ism. After the death of al-Mughirah he was elevated to the governorship of al-Kufah, a position which made him the absolute ruler of the eastern part of the empire, including Arabia and Persia. With a trained bodyguard 4000 strong who acted also as spies and police, he ruled tyrannically and tracked down mercilessly anyone who dared show favour to \* All's descendants or revile Mu'awiyah.

In Mu'awiyah the sense of finesse politique was developed to a degree probably higher than in any other caliph. To his Arab biographers his supreme virtue was his hilm^ that unusual ability to resort to force only when force was absolutely necessary and to use peaceful measures in all other instances. His prudent mildness by which he tried to disarm the enemy and shame the opposition, his slowness to anger and his absolute self-control left him under all circumstances master of the situation. "I apply not my

sword", he is reported to have declared, here my lash suffices, nor my lasn where my tongue is enough. And even if there be one hair binding me to my fellowmen, I do not let it break: when they pull I loosen, and if they loosen I pull."<sup>2</sup> The following is a copy of a letter he is supposed to have forwarded to al-Hasan on the occasion of the latter's abdication:

I admit that because of thy blood relationship thou art more entitled to this high office than I. And if I were sure of thy greater ability to fulfil the duties involved I would unhesitatingly swear allegiance to thee. Now then, ask what thou wilt." Enclosed was a blank for al-Hasan to fill in, already signed by Mu'awiyah.<sup>3</sup>

Despite many excellences Mu'awiyah was no favourite with several of the historians whose works have come down to us. They regarded him as the first malik (king) in Islam; and to the true Arab the title was so abhorrent that it was applied almost exclusively to non-Arab potentates. The historians' attitude was a reflection of that of the puritans, who accused him of having secularized Islam and changed the khilafat al-nubuwwah (the prophetic, i.e. theocratic, caliphate) to a mulk<sup>4</sup>—a temporal sovereignty. Among his profane creations, they point out, was

<sup>1</sup> Fakhrt, p. 145; \*Iqd<sup>t</sup> vol. ii, p. 304; Mas'udi, vol. v, p. 410.

\* Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 283; 'Iqd, vol. i, p. 10. ' Tabari, vol. ii, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Khaldun, Muqaddamah, pp. 169 seq. Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 757.

the maqsurah?—a sort of bower inside the mosque reserved for the exclusive use of the caliph. The Friday noon



sermon (khutbali) he read while seated.<sup>2</sup> He was the first to institute a royal throne (sarzr al-mulfy? The Arabic annals, mostly composed in the 'Abbasid period or under Shi'ite influence, impugn his piety. The Syrian tradition, however, preserved in ibn-'Asakir, reveals him as a good Moslem. To his Umayyad successors he bequeathed a precedent of clemency, energy, astuteness and statesmanship which many tried to emulate,<sup>4</sup> though few succeeded. He was not only the first but also one of the best of Arab kings.

<sup>1</sup> Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 265; Dinawari, p. 229; Tabari, vol. ii, p. 70, 1. 20.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-al-Tbri, p. 188.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-Khaldun, Muqaddamah, p. 217; al-Qalqashandi, Subh al-A'sha, vol. iv (Cairo, 1914), p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Mas'udi, vol. v, p. 78. Mu'awiyah's tomb in the cemetery of [al-]Bab al-\$aghir at Damascus is still visited.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### HOSTILE RELATIONS WITH THE BYZANTINES

WHILE Mu'awiyah was still insecure in his new position and had his hands full with domestic affairs he found it expedient to purchase (658 or 659) a truce from the Emperor Constans II (641-68) at the price of a yearly tribute mentioned by Theo-phanis<sup>1</sup> and referred to in passing by al-Baladhuri.<sup>2</sup> But soon afterward the tribute was repudiated and hostilities against the Byzantine possessions both by land and sea were pressed more zealously and persistently than by any of Mu'awiyah's immediate successors. Twice did Mu'awiyah stretch out his mighty arm against the enemy

capital itself. The main object of these raids into Bilad al-Rum (the territory of the Romans, Asia Minor) was of course the acquisition of booty, though the dim spectacle of Constantinople may have beckoned beyond in the distant background. Gradually the razzias became annual summer affairs and served the purpose of keeping the army physically fit and well trained. Yet the Arabs never succeeded in establishing a permanent foothold in Asia Minor. Their main energy was directed eastward and westward along the lines of least resistance. Otherwise the story of Arab-Byzantine relations in Asia Minor and even across the Hellespont might have been different. On the north the lofty ranges of the Taurus and Anti-Taurus seem to have been eternally fixed by nature as the boundary line, and the Arabic language appears to have frozen upon their southern slopes. Though brought later by Saljuq and by Ottoman Turks within the political orbit of Islam, no part of Asia Minor ever became Arabic speaking. Its basic population from earliest antiquity, beginning with Hittite days, has always been non-Semitic, and its climate has proved too rigorous for Arab civilization to strike deep root in its soil.

The long cordon of Moslem fortifications stretching from Malatyah (or Malatiah, Melitene) by the upper Euphrates to <sup>1</sup> P. 347- <sup>1</sup> P- <59» 1. 1= Hitti, p. 245.

Tarsus near the Mediterranean coast and including Adhanah, al-Massisah (Mopsuestia) and Mar'ash (Germanicia) had its units all strategically situated at the intersections of military roads or at the entrances of narrow mountain passes. These strongholds with their environs were called 'awasim. But 'awasim in the narrower sense meant the inner, the southern, line of fortresses within the military marches in contradistinction to the outer, northern, strip of land called thughurf- which shrank under the 'Abbasids, reaching only

from Awlas on the Mediterranean past Tarsus to Sumaysat(Samosata)on the Euphrates.<sup>2</sup> The line guarding Mesopotamia to the north-east was styled al-thughilr al-Jazarzyah\ that guarding Syria, al-thughur al-Sha mlyah? Tarsus, which commanded the southern entrance of the celebrated pass across the Taurus known as the Cilician Gates and served as a military base for Arab attacks on the land of the Greeks, was no less than four hundred and fifty miles in a direct line from the Bosphorus. The other pass by which the mountain range of the Taurus could be traversed lay to the northeast and was called Darb al-Hadath. It led from Mar'ash north to Abulustayn<sup>4</sup> and was less frequented. These Arab marches formed a “no man’s land” and their strongholds changed hands again and again as the tide of war ebbed or flowed. Under the Umayyads and 'Abbasids almost every foot was fought over repeatedly and bitterly; scarcely any land in Asia is more soaked in blood.

As early as A.H. 34 (655), while Mu'awiyah was still governor of Syria under 'Uthman, his fleet under Busr ibn-abi-Artah<sup>5</sup> in co-operation with the Egyptian fleet under 'Abdullah ibn-abi-Sarh met the Greek navy led by the Emperor Constans II, son of Heraclius, at Phoenix (modern Finike) on the Lycian coast and scored the first great naval victory of Islam. This maritime engagement is referred to in Arabic chronicles as dhu (or dhat) -al-Sawari (that of the masts).® The Arabs transformed

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Guy Le Strange, *The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate* (Cambridge, 1905), p. 128.

' Isfakhri, pp. 67-8.  
163 seq.

' Baladhuri, pp. 183 seq.,

<sup>4</sup> Yaqut, vol. i, pp. 93-4; cf. Le Strange, *Eastern Caliphate*, p. 133. The Byzantine name was Ablastha, the Greek

Arabissus, late Arabic al-Bustan.

<sup>b</sup> Ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, pp. 189-90; ibn-Hajar, vol. i, 153.

<sup>6</sup> Either after the name of the place itself, which is said to have been rich in cypress trees from which masts {ḥaward) could be fashioned, or because of the number of masts of the many ships engaged.

[1](#)

<sup>8</sup> A plain 20 miles south of Damascus. [1](#) Baladhuri, p. 121 = Hitti, p. 187.

[2](#)

Theophanes, p. 339; Constantine Porphyrogenitus, " De administrando imperio", in J.-P. Migne, Patrologia Graca, vol. cxih (Paris, 1864), col. 109; Dan. 11 : 31. Sophronius was probably of Maronite origin.

[3](#)

55

[4](#)

Arabic al-Mada'in, literally the cities, which included Seleucia and Ctesiphon on either side of the Tigris some 20 miles south-east of Baghdad.

[5](#)

Tabari, vol. i, p. 2436; cf. ibn-al-Athir, vol. ii, p. 400; Caetani, Annali, vol. iii,

pp. 742-6.

[6](#)

Ibn-al-Tiqtaqa, al-Fakhri, ed. H. Derenbourg (Paris, 1895), P-U4-

[7](#)

Fakhri, p. 115; tr. C. E. J. Whitting (London, 1947), p. 79. Cf. al-Dinawari, at\* Akhbdr al-J'iwāl, ed. V. Guirgass (Leyden, 1888), p. 134.

[8](#)

Balādhuri, p. 244 = Hitti, p. 392; cf. Fakhri, pp. 114-15.

[9](#)

\* The Persians called their country Irān, of which Pārs (the home of its two greatest dynasties, the Achaemenid and the Sāsānid) was but the southern province. The Greeks corrupted old Pers. Pārsa to Persia and used it for the whole kingdom.

[10](#)

' See Tabari, vol. i, pp. 2545-51; Caetani, vol. iv, pp. 151-3, vol. v, pp. 19-27, vol. vii, pp. 219-20, 248-56.

[11](#)

Ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, p. 65.

[12](#)

<sup>1</sup> Balādhuri, p. 213 = Hitti, p. 336; ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, pp. 61 seq.

[13](#)

<sup>8</sup> Called later by the Arabs 'Arnüd al-Sawäri, from Diocletian's pillar which still marks the spot. Maqrizi, Ma-wä'if, ed. Wiet, vol. iii, pp. 128 seq.

[14](#)

The Qaysäriyah of the Arabs. Ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, pp. 41, 4a.

[15](#)

See Maqrizi, vol. iii, pp. 113-43; Suyü{i, Husn, vol. i, pp. 43-5.

[16](#)

\* H. Zotenberg, Chronique de Jean, évêque de Nikiou. Texte éthiopien, with translation (Paris, 1883), p. 450.

[17](#)

Baladhuri, p. 221= Hitti, pp. 347-8.

[18](#)

' Al-Ifadah w-al-l'tibar, ed. and tr. (Latin) J. White (Oxford, 1800), p. 114.

[19](#)

Al-Qifti, Tarikh al-Ilukama , ed. J. Lippert (Leipzig, 1903), pp. 355-6; abu-al-Faraj ibn-al-'Ibri, Tarikh Mukhtasar al-Duival, ed. A. \$alihani (Beirut, 1890), pp. 175-6; Maqrizi, vol. iii, pp. 129-30. Consult Butler, pp. 401-26; Gibbon, Decline, ed. Bury, vol. v ,pp. 452-5.

[20](#)

See Waqidi, Maghdzi, pp. 391-2, and abu-Yusuf, Kitab al-Kharaj (Cairo, 1346), pp. 85-6, for the terms the Prophet gave.

[21](#)

\* An oasis about 100 miles north of al-Madinah on the road to Syria.

[22](#)

' Baladhuri, p. 66 = Hitti, pp. 101-2.

[23](#)

Modern Tatarayyah = Tiberias. 'Amwas or 'Amawas, ancient Emmaus, Lk. 24 : 13.

[24](#)

Shahrastani, p. 15.

[25](#)

\* Al-Zubayr's mother was a sister of the Prophet's father.

[26](#)

\* At the age of nine or ten, according to ibn-Hisham, p. iooi..

[27](#)

Consult Thomas W. Arnold, The Caliphate (Oxford, 1924), pp 9-41.

[28](#)

Pp. 5-10. . [29](#) Muqaddamah, p. 161.

[29](#)

\* Shahrastani, pp. 108-9: ibn-Khaldun, pp. 164-5.

[30](#)

See ibn-Hajar, vol. ii, p. 13; Dinawari, p. 231. ' Tabari, vol. ii, p. 3.

[31](#)

- Ya'qūbi, vol. ii, p. 266. <sup>4</sup> Ibn-'Asakir, vol. iv, p. 216,1. 21.

[32](#)

- Ibn-Hajar, vol. ii, p. 17.

[33](#)

Ibn-'Asakir, vol. v, p. 80.

[34](#)

<sup>1</sup> Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 265 Wellhausen, Reich, p. 85, considers the report of this appointment fictitious.

[35](#)

Wellhausen, Reich, p. 84.

\* P- 35 ^-

[36](#)



‘ Mas’udi, vol. v, pp. 69-73; cf. Tabari, vol. ii, pp. 174’7-

[37](#)

- Dinawari, pp. 232-3; Tabari, vol. ii, pp. 69-70; ibn- Asakir, vol. v, p. 397.

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the sea fight into a hand-to-hand encounter by tying each Arab ship to a Byzantine vessel.<sup>1</sup> The battle proved a second Yarmuk; the Byzantine forces were completely destroyed.<sup>2</sup> Al-Tabari<sup>3</sup> describes the water of the sea as saturated with blood. The Arabs, however, did not take advantage of the victory and push on to Constantinople, probably because of the murder of 'Uthman, which occurred about this time, and other concomitant civil disturbances.

Three times was Constantinople attacked by Umayyad forces, the only occasions on which Syro- Arabs ever succeeded in reaching the high triple wall of the mighty capital. The first was in A.H. 49 (669) under the leadership of the crown prince Yazid, whose warriors were the first ever to set eyes on Byzantium.<sup>4</sup> Yazid was sent by his father to support the land campaign of Fadalāh ibn-'Ubayd al-Ansari, who had wintered (668-9) in Chalcedon (the Asiatic suburb of Byzantium), and as a response to those puritans who might look askance at Yazid's intended nomination as successor to the reigning caliph. The siege laid by Yazid and Fadalāh in the spring of 669 was raised in the summer of the same year; Byzantium had a new and energetic emperor, Constantine IV (668-85).

In legend Yazid distinguished himself for bravery and fortitude below the walls of Constantinople and earned the title *fata al-Arab* (the young champion or hero of the Arabs). The Aghani<sup>v</sup>\* relates that alternate shouts of jubilation were heard from two separate tents as the Arabs or the Byzantines made headway in the battle. On learning that one tent was occupied by the daughter of the king of the Rum and the other by the daughter of Jabalah ibn-al-Ayham, Yazid was spurred to extraordinary activity in order to seize the Ghassanid king's daughter. But the real

legendary hero of the campaign was the aged abu-Ayyub al-Ansari, the standard-bearer of the Prophet, who had harboured Muhammad in al-Madinah on the occasion of the Hijrah<sup>6</sup> and whose presence in Yazid's contingent was desired more for the blessing it might bring. Tradition asserts that in the course of the siege abu-Ayyub died of dysentery and was buried before the walls of Constantinople. His legendary tomb soon became a shrine even for the Christian Greeks, who made pilgrimages to it in time of drought to pray for rain.<sup>1</sup> During the siege of Constantinople in 1453 by the Turks, the tomb was miraculously discovered by rays of light—an episode comparable to the discovery of the holy lance at Antioch by the early Crusaders—and a mosque was built on the site. Thus did the Madinese gentleman become a saint for three nations.

The second attack on Constantinople was made in the so-called seven years' war<sup>2</sup> (54-60/674-80), which was waged mainly between the two fleets before Constantinople. The Arabs had secured a naval base in the Sea of Marmara on the peninsula of Cyzicus,<sup>3</sup> mistaken for "the isle of Arwad"<sup>4</sup> in the Arab chronicles. This served as winter headquarters for the invading army, whence hostilities were resumed every spring. The Arab accounts of these campaigns are badly confused. The use of Greek fire is supposed to have saved the city. This highly combustible compound, which would burn even on water, was invented by a Syrian refugee from Damascus named Callinicus. The Greek accounts dilate on the disastrous effect of this fire on the enemy ships. Agapius of Manbij,<sup>5</sup> who follows Theophanes, emphasizes the habitual use of Greek fire by the Byzantines, who were the first to employ it in warfare.

To this period also belongs the temporary occupation of Rhodes (Rudis,<sup>®</sup> 672) and Crete (Iqritish, 674). Rhodes was again temporarily occupied in 717-18. On a previous occasion (654) it had been pillaged by the Arabs, and two years later the remains of its once famous colossus were sold for old metal to a dealer who is said to have employed nine hundred camels to carry them away. Later it was again conquered by Arab adventurers from Spain.

On the death of Mu'awiyah (680) the Arab fleet withdrew <sup>n r</sup>:  
• from the Bosphorus and Aegean waters, but attacks against “the territory of the Romans” were by no means relinquished.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Sa'd, vol. iii, pt. 2, p. 50; followed by Tabari, vol. iii, p. 2324. Both authorities fix A.H. 52 as the year of his death.

<sup>2</sup> See J. B. Bury, *A History of the Later Roman Empire* (London, 1899), vol. ii, p. 310, n. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Theophanis, pp. 353-4.

<sup>4</sup> Tabari, vol. ii, p. 163; Baladhuri, p. 236 — Hitti, p. 376.

<sup>5</sup> “Kitab al-'Unwan,” pt. 2, ed. A. Vasiliev, in *Palrologia Orientalis* (Paris, 1912), vol. viii, p. 492.

\* Baladhuri, p. 236 = Hitti, p. 375.

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We read of almost yearly summer incursions (saifah), though none assumed importance until the caliphate of Sulayman (725—77)—Sulayman considered himself the person referred to by the current hadith that a caliph bearing a prophet's name was to conquer Constantinople.

The second and last great siege of Constantinople was conducted (August 716—September 717 \*) under his reign by the stubborn Maslamah, the caliph's brother. This remarkable siege, the most threatening of the Arab attacks, is the one best known because of the many descriptions extant. The besiegers were reinforced both by sea and by land and received aid from Egyptian ships. They were provided with naphtha and special siege artillery.<sup>2</sup> The chief of Maslamah's guard, 'Abdulah al-Battal, particularly distinguished himself and won the title of champion of Islam. In the course of a later campaign (740<sup>3</sup>) he was killed. In later tradition, as Sayyid Ghazi, al-Battal became one of the Turkish national heroes. His grave, at which a Baktashi taklyah (monastery) with a mosque has risen, is still shown near Eski-Shahr (medieval Dorylaeum). His was another instance of "an illustrious Moslem for whom Christians have raised a statue in one of their churches ".<sup>4</sup>

At last Emperor Leo the Isaurian (717-41), a soldier of humble Syrian origin from Mar ash who knew Arabic as perfectly as Greek,<sup>5</sup> outwitted Maslamah and saved the capital. In connection with this siege we have the first historical reference to the chain which barred the way of the attacking fleet into the Golden Horn. The famous Greek fire and the attacks of the Bulgars wrought havoc in the ranks of the invaders. Famine, pestilence and the rigours of an unusually severe winter also did their share. But Maslamah persisted. The death of the caliph in Syria did not deter him from pushing the siege. But the order of the new caliph, 'Umar ibn-\*Abd-al-'Aziz (717-20), he had to heed. On the way back a tempest finished the work begun by the Byzantines; out of the 1800 vessels, if we are to believe Theo-phanis,<sup>6</sup> only five were spared to reach port in Syria. The Arab armada was gone. The Syrian founder of the Isaurian dynasty was hailed the saviour of Europe from the

Arab Moslems as Heraclius, the Armenian founder of the Heracleian dynasty, had

<sup>1</sup> Tabari, vol. ii, p. 1346; cf. Bury, vol. ii, p. 401, n. 2.

- Kttab al-'Uyun w-al-Hada tq, ed. de Goeje (Leyden, 1871), pt. 3, p. 24.

\* Tabari, vol. ii, p. 1716.  
74.

<sup>4</sup> Mas'udi, vol. viii, p.

<sup>6</sup> Kttab al-'Uyun, pt. 3, p. 25 • Pp. 395, 399. before him been declared the deliverer of Christendom from heathen Persia. Only on one other occasion after this did an Arab host venture to make its appearance within sight of Constantinople, and that when Harun, son of the Caliph al-Mahdi, encamped at Scutari (Chrysopolis) in 782 and the Empress Irene hastened to make peace by agreeing to pay tribute. The "city of Constantine" was not again to see a Moslem army beneath its walls until some seven centuries had passed and a new racial element, the Mongoloid Turks, had become the standard-bearers of the religion of Muhammad.

Though ending in failure, this determined and energetic expedition by Maslamah, like the one preceding it, has left many a legendary souvenir, including tales of the building of a mosque by the caliph's brother in Constantinople,<sup>1</sup> of the erection by him of a fountain<sup>2</sup> and a mosque<sup>3</sup> at Abydos (Abdus) and of his entrance on horseback into St. Sophia. Writing in 985, al-Maqdisi<sup>4</sup> has this to say: "When Maslamah ibn-'Abd-al-Malik invaded the country of the Romans and penetrated into their territory he stipulated that the Byzantine dog should erect by his own palace in the

Hippodrome {maydan) a special building to be occupied by the [Moslem] notables and noblemen when taken captive”.<sup>5</sup>

The

Mardaithes

One factor in the check of the Arab policy of northward penetration was the activity of the Christian Mardaithes (rebels) in the service of the Byzantine cause. A people of undetermined origin leading a semi-independent national life in the fastnesses of al-Lukkam (Amanus), these Jarajimah (less correctly Jurajimah), as they were also styled by the Arabs, furnished irregular troops and proved a thorn in the side of the Arab caliphate in Syria. On the Arab—Byzantine border they formed “a brass wall” <sup>6</sup> in

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Taghri-Birdi, *al-Nujum al-Zahir ah fi Muluk Mi\$ir w-al-Qahirah*, ed. W. Popper (Berkeley, 1909-12), vol. ii, pt. 2, p. 40, 11. 12-13, refers to a Fafimid khutbah pronounced in this mosque. See *ibn-al-Qalanisi, Dhayl Tarikh Dimashq*, ed. H. F. Amedroz (Beirut, 1908), p. 68, 11. 27-8. The mosque survived in tradition in the Mamluk period.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-Khurdadhbih, *al-Masalik w-al-Mamalik*, ed. de Goeje (Leyden, 1889), p. 104, 1. I; Mas’udi, vol. ii, p. 317, calls the place Andalus.

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-al-Faqih (al-Hamadhani), *Kitab al-Buldan*, ed. de Goeje (Leyden, 1885), p. 145, 1. 15; Yaqut, vol. i, p. 374, refers to the town under the name Andus, a mistake for Abdus.

<sup>4</sup> P. 147- .

- This building, al-Balat, is referred to in Yaqut, vol. i, p. 709, as being in use at the time of Sayf-al-Dawlah al-Hamdani (944-67). For etymology of balat see below, p. 501, n. 1.
- Theophanes, p. 364.

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 defence of Asia Minor. About 666 their bands penetrated into the heart of Lebanon and became the nucleus around which many fugitives and malcontents, among whom were the Maronites, grouped themselves. Mu'awiyah agreed to the payment of a heavy annual tribute to the Byzantine emperor in consideration of his withdrawal of support from this internal enemy, to whom he also agreed to pay a tribute. About 689 Justinian II once more loosed the Mardaite highlanders on Syria, and \*Abd-al-Malik, following "the precedent of Mu'awiyah",<sup>1</sup> accepted the new conditions laid down by the emperor and agreed to pay a thousand dinars weekly to the Jarajimah. Finally the majority of the invaders evacuated Syria and settled in the inner provinces or on the coast of Asia Minor, where they became seafarers; others remained and constituted one of the elements that entered into the composition of the Maronite community that still flourishes in the northern Lebanon.

<sup>1</sup> Baladhuri, p. 160, l. 8 = Hitti, p. 247, l. 28.

## CHAPTER XIX

MARWAN (683-5), founder of the Marwanid branch of the Umayyad dynasty, was succeeded by his son ʿAbd-al-Malik (685-705), the "father of kings". Under ʿAbd-al-Malik's rule and that of the four sons who succeeded him<sup>1</sup> the dynasty at Damascus reached the meridian of its power and glory. During the reigns of al-Walid and Hisham the Islamic empire reached its greatest expansion, stretching from the shores of the Atlantic Ocean and the Pyrenees to the Indus



and the confines of China—an extent hardly rivalled in ancient times and surpassed in modern times only by the British and Russian empires. To this glorious period belong the subjugation of Transoxiana, the reconquest and pacification of North Africa and the acquisition of the largest European country ever held by Arabs—Spain.

This era witnessed the nationalizing, or Arabicizing, of the administration, the introduction of the first purely Arab coinage, the development of the postal service and the erection of such monuments as the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem—the third holiest sanctuary in Islam.

At his accession and during his first decade as caliph 'Abd-al-Malik was hemmed in by many foes, and like his great predecessor, Mu'awiyah, whose counterpart he was, had to face enemies on various fronts. Yet when he died at the close of a second decade he passed on to his son al-Walid a consolidated and pacified empire that included not only the whole world of Islam but also new-conquests of his own. Al-Walid proved a worthy successor of a capable father.

The acquisition of Syria, al-'Iraq, Persia and Egypt under 'Umar and 'Uthman having brought to an end the first stage in the history of Moslem conquest, the second now begins under \*Abd-al-Malik and al-Walid.

<sup>1</sup> Al-Walid (705-15), Sulayman (715-17), Yazid II (720-24) and Hisham (724-743). 'Umar (717-20), who interrupted the filial succession, was a son of 'Abd-al-Malik's brother 'Abd-al-'Aziz.

The brilliant military achievements of these two reigns centre on the names of al-Hajjaj ibn-Yusuf al-Thaqafi in the east and

Musa ibn

in the west.

al-Hajjâj

Al-Hajjaj, the young schoolmaster of al-Ta'if<sup>1</sup> in al-Hijaz who had laid down the pen and taken up the sword in support of the tottering Umayyad throne, was appointed governor of Arabia after having crushed (692) at the age of thirty-one the formidable pretender 'Abdullah ibn-al-Zubayr, who for nine years had held the title and power of caliph. In two years al-Hajjaj pacified al-Hijaz and with it al-Yaman and even al-Yamamah to the east, and was in December 694 summoned by 'Abd-al-Malik to perform a similar task in turbulent and dissatisfied al-'Iraq, whose people were "men of schism and hypocrisy".<sup>2</sup> Here the 'Alids and the Kharijites had continually made trouble for the Umayyads. The unexpected arrival of al-Hajjaj at the famous mosque of al-Kufah, in disguise and accompanied only by twelve cameleers, his brusque mounting of the pulpit and removal of the heavy turban which veiled his face, and his fiery oration, are among the most dramatic and popular episodes recounted in Arabic literature. The proclamation of his policy in unequivocal terms showed the 'Iraqis from the very start that his would be no kid-glove methods of dealing with a disloyal populace. Introducing his oration with a verse quoted from an ancient poet:

"I am he who scattereth darkness and climbeth lofty summits.

As I lift the turban from my face ye will know me", the speaker continued, "O people of al-Kufah! Certain am I that I see heads ripe for cutting, and verily I am the man to do

it. Methinks I see blood between the turbans and the beards.  
...”<sup>3</sup>

In fact no head proved too mighty for the relentless Umayyad viceroy to crush, no neck too high for him to reach. Even Anas ibn-Malik, the prolific traditionist and highly respected Companion of the Prophet, accused of sympathy with the opposition, had to wear around his neck a collar bearing the viceroy's seal.<sup>4</sup> Human lives to the number of 120,000<sup>5</sup> are said to have been

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Rustah, p. 216; ibn-Durayd, *Ishtiqaq*, p. 187.

<sup>2</sup> Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 326; Mas'udi, vol. v, p. 295.

<sup>3</sup> Mubarrad, *Kamil*, pp. 215-16; cf. Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 326; Mas'udi, vol. v, p. 294.

<sup>4</sup> Tabari, vol. ii, pp. 854-5.

\* Ibn-al-'Ibri, p. 195; cf. Mas'udi, vol. v, p. 382; *Tanbih.*, p. 318; *T<sup>a</sup>bari*, vol. ii, p. 1123.

sacrificed by this governor of al-\* Iraq, who is represented by the Arab historians, most of whom, it should be noted, were Shi'ites or Sunnites writing during the 'Abbâsid régime, as a bloodthirsty tyrant, a veritable Nero. In addition to his bloodthirstiness, his gluttony and impiety are favourite themes with the historians.<sup>1</sup>

Justifiable or not, the drastic measures of al-Hajjâj did not fail to restore order both among the rebellious Basrans and Küfans and throughout his vast viceroyalty, which included al-'Irâq and Persia. His lieutenants, led by al-Muhallab ibn-abi-Sufrah, practically exterminated (698 or 699) the Azraqis,<sup>2</sup> the most dangerous to Moslem unity of all the

Khârijites, who under the leadership of Qatari ibn-al-Fujâ'ah had acquired control of Karman,<sup>3</sup> Faris and other eastern provinces. On the opposite coast of the Persian Gulf, 'Umân, which in the days of the Prophet and 'Amr ibn-al-'As had been nominally brought under Islam, was now fully incorporated with the Umayyad realm. From his newly built capital on the west bank of the Tigris, Wâsit (medial), so called from its half-way position between the two key cities of al-'Iraq—al-Basrah and al-Küfah<sup>4</sup>—the Syrian garrison of al-Hajjâj held all these territories in submission. His blind faith in his Syrian troops, like his untainted loyalty to the Umayyad cause, knew no bounds.

With his domain pacified and well rounded out, the energetic viceroy now felt free to authorize his lieutenants to penetrate further east. One of them, 'Abd-al-Rahmân ibn-Muhammad ibn-al-Ash'ath, a scion of the ancient royal line of Kindah and governor of Sijistân, who later led a frightful revolt against the authority of al-Hajjâj, was sent (699-700) against the Zunbil (less correctly. Rutbil),<sup>5</sup> Turkish king of Kabul (in modern Afghanistan), who had refused to pay the customary tribute.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dinawari, Akhbâr, pp. 320-22; Mas'ûdi, vol. vii, p. 218; Tabari, vol. ii, pp. 1122-3; ibn-'Asâkir, vol. iv, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> So called from their first leader, Nâfi' ibn-al-Azraq, who taught that all followers of other than Khârijite doctrine were without exception infidels and doomed to death with their wives and children; Shahrastâni, pp. 89-90.

<sup>3</sup> Or Kirmân; Yâqût, vol. iv, p. 263.

\* Yâqût, vol. iv, pp. 881-2; cf. Tabari, vol. ii, pp. 1125-6. The town is but a mound of ruins.

<sup>5</sup> Wellhausen, Reich, p. 144, n. 3. “Zunbil” was a title. These kings may have been Persian.

<sup>f1</sup> Almost all the subjects of this and other kings in Central Asia were Iranian; the dynasties and armies were mostly Turkish.

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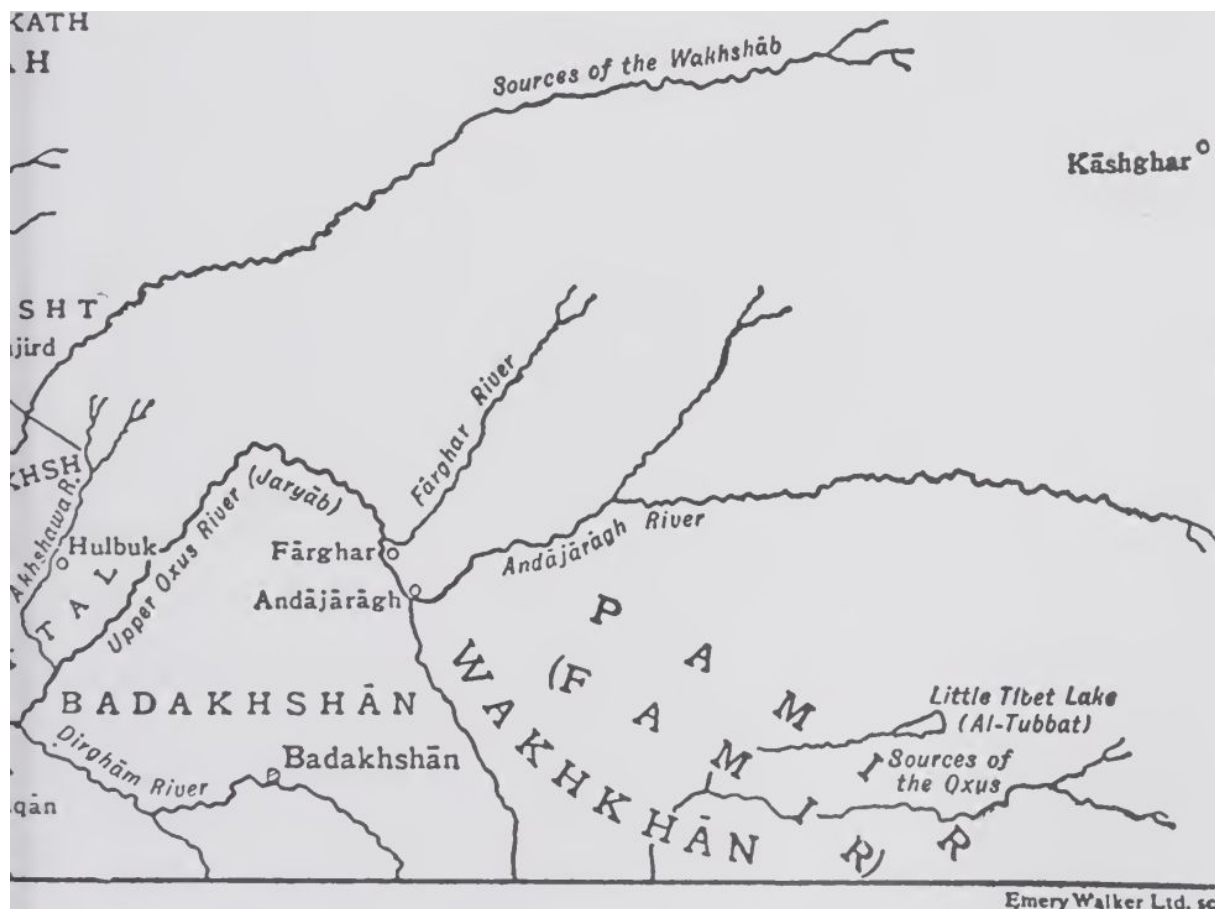
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Btlwetn fagti 20? and 209

## US AND JAXARTES

'Abd-al-Rahman's campaign at the head of such a magnificently equipped army that it was styled "the army of peacocks"<sup>1</sup> was entirely successful, but his exploits paled before those of Qutay-bah ibn-Muslim and Muhammad ibn-al-Qasim al-Thaqafi, a son-in-law of al-Hajjaj. On the recommendation of al-Hajjaj, Qutaybah was in 704 appointed governor over Khurasan with his capital at Marw; according to al-Baladhuri<sup>2</sup> and al-Tabari<sup>3</sup> he had under his command in Khurasan, which he held as a subordinate of al-Hajjaj, 40,000 Arab troops from al-Basrah, 7000 from al-Kufah and 7000 clients.

The Oxus,<sup>4</sup> which until now had formed the traditional, conquests though not historical, boundary-line between "Iran and Turan", "beyond i.e. between the Persian-speaking and the Turkish-speaking Hver" peoples, was now under al-Walid crossed and a permanent Moslem foothold established beyond it. In a series of brilliant campaigns Qutaybah recovered (705) lower Tukharistan with its capital, Balkh (the Baktra of the Greeks), conquered (706-9) Bukhara in al-Sughd (Sogdiana) and the territory around it and reduced (710-12) Samarqand (also in al-Sughd) and Khwa-nzm (modern Khiwa; to the west. In 713-15 he led an expedition into the Jaxartes provinces, particularly Farghanah, thus establishing nominal Moslem rule in what were until recent times known as the Central Asian khanates. The Jaxartes rather than the Oxus formed the natural political and racial frontier between Iranians and Turks, and its crossing constituted the first direct challenge by Islam to the Mongoloid peoples and the Buddhist religion. Bukhara, Balkh and Samarqand had Buddhist monasteries. In Samarqand Qutaybah fell upon a number of idols whose devotees expected instant destruction to overtake him who dared outrage them. Undeterred, the Moslem general set fire to the images with his own hand, an act which resulted in a number of conversions to Islam.<sup>5</sup> But no large numbers accepted the new faith until the pious caliphate of 'Umar II (717-20), when they were accorded the concession as Moslems of paying no tribute. Likewise the fire-temple of Bukhara with its sanctuary was demolished. Thus Bukhara with Samarqand and the province of Khwarizm were soon to become centres of Arabic

<sup>1</sup> Mas'udi, Tanbih, p. 314.  
1290-91.

\* P. 423.

<sup>8</sup> Vol. ii, pp.

\* Modern Amu Darya, Ar. and Pers. Jayhud. Jayhun for the Oxus and Sayhun for its sister river, the Jaxartes (Sir Darya), are adaptations of Gihon and Pison of Gen. 2 : 13, 11.                      \* Baladhuri, p. 421.

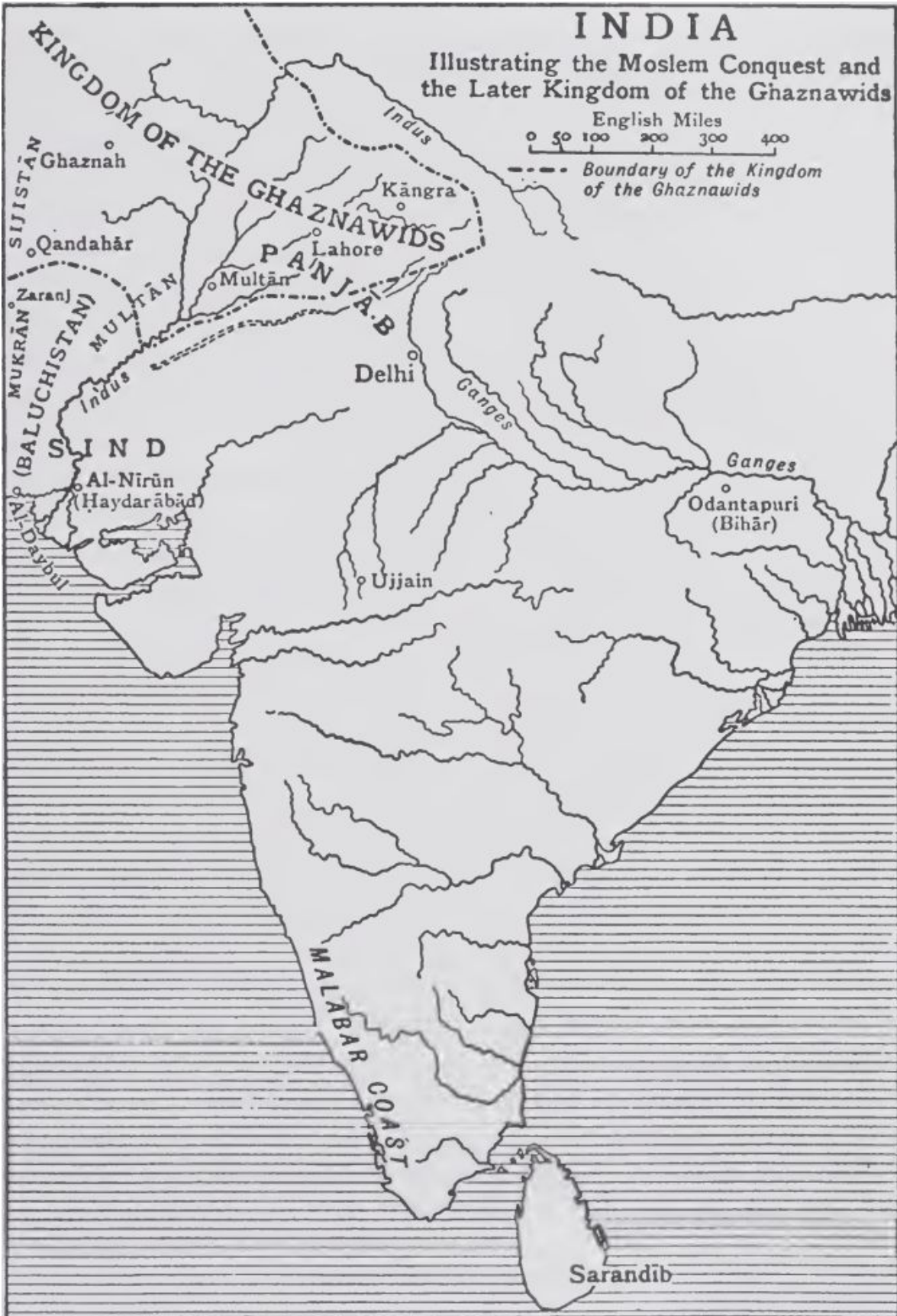
culture, nurseries of Islam in Central Asia, corresponding to Marw and Naysabur (Pers. Nishapur) in Khurasan. Qutaybah is said by al-Tabari<sup>4</sup> and others to have conquered (715) Kashghar in Chinese Turkestan and even to have reached China proper, but this tradition is evidently an anticipation of the later conquest by Nasr ibn-Sayyar and his successors.<sup>5</sup> This Nasr was appointed by the Caliph Hisham (724-43) as the first governor of Transoxiana and had to reconquer, between 738 and 740, most of the territory overrun earlier by Qutaybah. The Arab agents -established by Qutaybah were merely military overseers and tax-collectors functioning side by side with the native rulers, who retained the civil administration. An attempt in 737 on al-Khazar, Huns beyond the Caucasus who were later Judaized, failed. In 751 the Arabs occupied al-Shash (Tashkand), thus definitely establishing the supremacy of Islam in Central Asia so firmly that it was not further disputed by Chinese.<sup>6</sup>

Thus was Transoxiana {ma zvara al-nahr; what lies beyond the river) at last incorporated with the rising empire of the caliphs. The world of Islam was thereby brought into vital contact with a new racial element and a new culture in itself old—the Mongolian. We shall later deal at length with the significant part played by these fresh recruits to Islam.

### Conquests in India

The other column in the eastern theatre of war was in the meantime moving southward under Muhammad ibn-al-Qasim. Advancing in 710 at the head of a considerable

army, of which 6000 were Syrians, this son-in-law of al-Hajjaj subdued Mukran, pushed on through what is now termed Baluchistan and in 711-12 reduced Sind, the lower valley and delta of the Indus (Sindhu). Among the cities captured here were the seaport al-Daybul, which had a statue of the Buddha (Ar. Budd) "rising to a height of forty cubits",<sup>7</sup> and al-Nirun (modern Haydarabad). The conquest was extended (713) as far north as Multan in



southern Panjab, the seat of a renowned shrine of the Buddha» where the invaders found a large crowd of pilgrims, whom they took captive. This led to a permanent occupation of Sind and southern Panjab, but the rest of India was unaffected until the close of the tenth century, when a fresh invasion began under Mahmud of Ghaznah. Thus were the Indian border provinces for ever Islamized. As late as 1947 the new Moslem state of Pakistan was born. Contact between Semitic Islam and Indian Buddhism was permanently established, just as farther north contact was made with Turkish culture. Al-Hajjaj had promised the governorship of China to whichever of his two great generals, al-Thaqafi or Qutaybah, should first set foot on its soil. But neither of them ever crossed the frontier. China proper, exclusive of Turkestan, with its present-day fifteen or more million Moslems, was never brought within the orbit of Islam. Sind in the south, like Káshghar and Táshkand in the north, became and remained the easternmost limit of the caliphate.

### Against the Byzantines

While these major operations were going on in the east the Byzantine front was not entirely neglected. In the early part of his reign, and while ibn-al-Zubayr was contesting the caliphate, Abd-al-Malik followed “the precedent of Mu'awiyah”<sup>1</sup> in paying tribute (a.H. 70/689-90) to the “tyrant of the Romans”, whose agents, the Christian Jarajimah of al-Lukkam, had then penetrated the Lebanon. But when the internal political horizon cleared hostilities were resumed with the eternal enemy. In 692 Justinian II was defeated near the Cilician Sebastopolis, and about 707 Tyana (al-Tuwanah), the most important fortress of Cappadocia, was taken. After capturing Sardis and Pergamum, Maslamah, as we learned before, undertook his



memorable siege of Constantinople (August 716-September 717). The Moslem army which crossed the Dardanelles at Abydos was equipped with siege artillery, but the armada had to anchor near the walls of the city in the Sea of Marmora and in the Bosphorus, as passage into the Golden Horn was barred by a chain. This was the second time the Byzantine capital had been besieged by an Arab army (above, p. 203). Scarcity of provisions and attacks by the Bulgars forced the Arabs to retire after a whole year of beleaguering.<sup>2</sup> Armenia, which had been conquered for Mu'áwi-

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 205. Baládhuri, p. 160.

' Consult Theophanes, pp. 386-99; Tabari, vol ii, pp 1314-17; ibn-al-Athir vol. v, pp. 17-

19. \* yah by Habib ibn-Maslamah al-Fihri as early as 644-5, had later taken advantage of the ibn-al-Zubayr debacle to revolt, but was now again reduced.<sup>1</sup>

The conquests on the western front under Musa ibn-Nusayr Conquests and his lieutenants were no less brilliant and spectacular than in northly those on the east by al-Hajjaj and his generals. Soon after the Indlouth. subjugation of Egypt (640-43) raids were carried westward into western Ifriqiyah,<sup>2</sup> but a thorough conquest of that territory was not Europe undertaken until the foundation of al-Qayrawan<sup>3</sup> in 670 by 'Uqbah ibn-Nafi', an agent of Mu'awiyah, who used it as a base for operations against the Berber tribes. 'Uqbah, who is said by tradition to have advanced until the waves of the Atlantic stopped his horse, suffered a martyr's death (683) near Biskra in modern Algeria, where his tomb has become a national shrine. Even then the Arab hold on Ifriqiyah was so precarious that soon after 'Uqbah's death his successor had to evacuate the territory. Not until the

governorship of Hassan ibn-al-Nu'man al-Ghassani (ca. 693-700) was an end put to Byzantine authority and Berber resistance. With the co-operation of a Moslem fleet, Hassan drove the Byzantines from Carthage (698) and other coast towns. He was then free to take the field against the Berbers, now led by a prophetess (Ar. kahinafi)\* who exercised a mysterious influence over her followers. The heroine was at last defeated by treachery and killed near a well that still bears her name, Blr al-Kahinah.

Hassan, the reconqueror and pacifier of Ifriqiyah, was followed by the famous Musa ibn-Nusayr, under whom the government of the region, administered from al-Qayrawan, was made independent of Egypt and held directly from the caliph in Damascus. Musa, whose father (together with the grandfather of ibn-Ishaq, the Prophet's biographer) was one of the Christian captives who fell into the hands of Khalid ibn-al-Walid while they were studying the Gospels in the church at 'Ayn al-Tamr,<sup>5</sup> extended <sup>1</sup> Baladhuri, pp. 205 seq. = Hitti, pp. 322 seq.

' More exact than "Ifriqiyah"; name borrowed by Arabs from Romans and given to the eastern part of Barbary, the word Maghrib being reserved for the western part. Today the term Ifriqiyah includes the whole continent of Africa.

\* From Pers, karuudn, whence Eng. caravan.

<sup>4</sup> Baladhuri, p. 229; ibn-Khaldun, vol. vii, pp. 8-9; ibn-'Idhari, al-Bayan al-Mughnb fi Akhbar al-Maghrib, ed. R. Dozy (Leyden, 1848), vol. i, pp. 20-24. That she belonged to a Jewish tribe is doubtful.

\* Others claim he was a Lakhmid or Yamanite. Cf. Baladhuri, p. 230; ibn-'Idhari, vol. i, p. 24.

the boundaries of his province as far as Tangier. This brought Islam definitely and permanently into contact with another racial group, the Berbers. The latter belonged to the Hamitic branch of the white family, and in prehistoric times probably formed one stock with the Semites.<sup>1</sup> At the time of the Moslem conquest most of the Berbers on the strip of fertile land bordering on the sea had become Christians. In this region Tertullian, St. Cyprian and above all St. Augustine became princes among early Christian fathers. Otherwise the population was not deeply touched by Roman civilization, for the Romans and Byzantines lived mainly in towns on the coast and represented a culture that was quite alien to the mentality of these nomadic and semi-nomadic North Africans. On the other hand Islam had a special attraction for people in such a cultural stage as that of the Berbers; moreover, the Semitic Arabs, akin to the early Phoenicians who had colonized parts of northern Africa and developed in Carthage a formidable rival to Rome, readily established intimate relations with their Hamitic cousins. Punic survived in country places until shortly before the Moslem conquest. This explains the seemingly inexplicable miracle of Islam in Arabicizing the language and Islamizing the religion of these semi-barbarous hordes and using them as fresh relays in the race toward further conquests. Thus did the blood of the conquerors find fresh ethnic strains for its enrichment, the Arabic tongue a vast field for conquest and rising Islam a new foothold in its climb toward world supremacy.

After the subjugation of the North African coast as far as the Atlantic by Músa,<sup>2</sup> the way was open for the conquest of the neighbouring south-western part of Europe. In 711 Tariq, a Berber freedman and lieutenant of Musa, took the momentous step of crossing into Spain on a marauding expedition. The raid developed into a conquest of the Iberian Peninsula (al-Andalus) (below, pp. 493 seq\ This

constituted the last and most sensational of the major campaigns of the Arabs and resulted in the addition to the Moslem world of the largest European territory ever held by them. After the capture of several towns in southern Gaul the advance of the Arab-Berber army was checked in 732 between

<sup>1</sup> Eng. "Berber", generally considered as coming ultimately from Ar. Barbar, may have come, together with the Arabic form, from L. barbari (originally Gr.), barbarians, applied in current usage by the Latinized cities of Roman Africa to all natives who did not adopt the Latin tongue. \* Ibn-'Abd-al Hakam, pp. 203-5.

Tours and Poitiers by Charles Martel. This point marks the north-western limit of Arab penetration.

The year 732 marked the first centennial of the Prophet's death. From this vantage point in history and geography let us pause to view the general situation. One hundred years after the death of the founder of Islam his followers were the masters of an empire greater than that of Rome at its zenith, an empire extending from the Bay of Biscay to the Indus and the confines of China and from the Aral Sea to the lower cataracts of the Nile, and the name of the prophet-son of Arabia, joined with the name of almighty Allah, was being called five times a day from thousands of minarets scattered over south-western Europe, northern Africa and western and central Asia. Damascus, which young Muhammad according to tradition hesitated to enter because he wished to enter paradise only once, had become the capital of this huge empire.<sup>8</sup> In the heart of the city, set like a pearl in the emerald girdle of its gardens, stood the glittering palace of the Umayyads, commanding a view of flourishing plain which extended south-westward to Mount Hermon<sup>9</sup> with its turban of perpetual snow. Al-Khadra'<sup>10</sup> (the green

one) was its name. Its builder was none other than Mu'awiyah, founder of the dynasty, and it stood beside the Umayyad Mosque which al-Walid had newly adorned and made into that jewel of architecture which still attracts lovers of beauty. In the audience chamber a square seat covered with richly embroidered cushions formed the caliphal throne, on which during formal audiences the caliph, in gorgeous flowing robes, sat cross-legged. On the right stood his paternal relatives in a row according to seniority, on the left his maternal relatives.<sup>11</sup> Courtiers, poets and petitioners stood behind. The more formal audiences were held in the glorious Umayyad Mosque, even today one of the most magnificent places of worship in the world. In some such setting must al-Walid (others say Sulayman, who had just ascended the throne) have received Musa ibn-Nusayr and Tariq, the conquerors of Spain, with their vast train of prisoners<sup>12</sup> including members of



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the fair-haired Gothic royalty and undreamt-of treasures. If any single episode can exemplify the zenith of Umayyad glory it is this.

The Arabicization of the state under 'Abd-al-Malik and al-NationWalid consisted in changing the language of the public registers <sup>alizin</sup>£ (diwan) from Greek to Arabic in Damascus and from Pahlawi <sup>thestatc</sup> to Arabic in al-'Iraq and the eastern provinces and in the creation of an Arabic coinage. With the change of language a change in personnel naturally took place. The early conquerors, fresh from the desert and ignorant of book-keeping and finance, had to retain in the exchequer the Greek-writing officials in Syria and the Persian-writing officials in al-Traq and Persia who were familiar with the work. But now the situation had changed. Undoubtedly certain non-Arab officials who by this time had mastered the Arabic language were retained, as was the old system itself. The transition must have been slow, beginning under 'Abd-al-Malik and continuing during the reign of his successor. This is probably the reason why some authorities ascribe the change to the father and others to the son.<sup>1</sup> The step was part of a well-planned policy and not due to any such trivial cause as that put forth by al-Baladhuri—the urination of a Greek clerk in an inkwell.<sup>2</sup> In al-'Iraq and its eastern dependencies it was evidently the famous al-Hajjaj who initiated the change.

In pre-Islamic days Roman and Persian money was current in al-Hijaz, together with a few Himyarite silver coins bearing

the Attic owl. 'Umar, Mu'awiyah and the other early caliphs contented themselves with this foreign coinage already in circulation<sup>3</sup> and perhaps in some cases stamped on it certain koranic superscriptions. A number of gold and silver pieces were struck before the time of 'Abd-al-Malik, but those were imitations of Byzantine and Persian types. 'Abd-al-Malik struck at Damascus, in 695, the first gold dinars and silver dirhams which were purely Arabic.<sup>4</sup> His viceroy in al-'Iraq, al-Hajjaj, minted silver in al-Kufah in the following year.<sup>5</sup>

Besides instituting a purely Islamic coinage and Arabicizing the administration of the empire, 'Abd-al-Malik developed a

<sup>1</sup> Baladhuri, pp. 193, 300-301; Mawardi, pp. 349-50; 'Iqd<sub>t</sub> vol. ii, p. 322.

<sup>2</sup> P. 193 = Hitti, p. 301.  
pp. 465-6.

• Baladhuri,

\* Tabari, vol. ii, p. 939; Baladhuri, p. 240.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Yaqut, Buldan, vol. iv, p. 886.

regular postal service,<sup>1</sup> using relays of horses for the conveyance of travellers and dispatches between Damascus and the provincial capitals. The service was designed primarily to meet the needs of government officials and their correspondence, and the

Fiscal and other reforms

postmasters were charged among other duties with the task of keeping the caliph posted on all important happenings in their respective territories.



In connection with the monetary changes it may be well to note the fiscal and administrative reforms that took place at this time. In principle no Moslem, whatever his nationality might be, was under obligation to pay any tax other than the zakâh



From "Katalog der orientalischen Münzen, Königliche Museen zu Berlin" (H. v. Gruyter & Co., Berlin)

#### AN IMITATION IN GOLD OF A BYZANTINE COIN WITH ARABIC INSCRIPTION

Retaining on the obverse the figures of Heraclius, Heraclius Constantine, and Heracleonas, and on the reverse a modified Byzantine cross. No mint name is given.

or poor rate, though in practice the privilege was often limited to Arabian Moslems. Taking advantage of this theory many



From "Katalog der orientalischen .Münzen in Berliner Museen" (H'alter de Gruyter Co., Berlin) COPPER COIN OF 'ABD-AL-MALIK Bearing on the obverse his image and his name and on the reverse on four steps together with the shahādah and the mint name, Ba'labakk. An imitation of a Byzantine coin. '

were entitled to a special subsidy.

sary measures to restore such men to their farms<sup>3</sup> and reim

new converts to Islam, particularly from al-Traq and Khurasan, now began to leave the villages where they had worked as agriculturists and flock to the cities, hoping thereby to join the army as mawali (clients).<sup>2</sup> This constituted a double loss to the treasury, for at conversion their taxes were greatly reduced and upon becoming soldiers they Al-Hajjaj took the necesposed on them the high tribute they had paid before conversion,

' Al-\*Umari, al-Ta'rif bi-al-Alustalah al-Sharif (Cairo, 1312), p. 185.

<sup>3</sup> This word, used later for freedmen, had at this time no connotation of inferiority, • Mubarrad, p. 286.

which included the equivalent of kharaj (land tax) and jizyah (poll tax). He even made Arabs who acquired property in a kharaj territory pay the usual land tax.

The Caliph 'Umar II (717-20) tried to remedy the resultant dissatisfaction among the Neo-Moslems by re-establishing the old principle of his earlier namesake that a Moslem, whether Arab or mawla, need pay no tribute whatsoever, but he insisted that the kharaj land was the joint property of the Moslem community.<sup>1</sup> He thus prohibited after the year A.H. 100 (718-19) the sale of kharaj lands to Arabs and Moslems and declared that if the owner of such land be converted his property should revert to the village community and he might continue to use it as a leaseholder.

Though inspired by the best of intentions, 'Umar's policy was not successful. It diminished the revenues of the state and increased the number of clients in the cities.<sup>2</sup> Many Berbers and Persians embraced Islam to enjoy the pecuniary privileges thus accorded them. Later practice reverted to the system of al-Hajjaj, with minor modifications. It was not until then that the distinction was drawn between jizyah, a burden which "falls off with the acceptance of Islam", and kharaj, which does not. Since the jizyah was a comparatively small item, the treasury continued to receive its main income from the kharaj and did not in the long run appreciably suffer.

Other cultural and agricultural reforms are attributed to the versatility and energy of al-Hajjaj. He dug a number of new canals and restored the large one between the Tigris and the Euphrates. He drained and tilled submerged or uncultivated lands. He contributed to the development of

diacritical marks in Arabic orthography to distinguish such similarly written letters as ba, ta and tha , dal and dhal, and to the adaptation from Syriac of vowel signs, dammah (u), fathah (a) and kasrah (/), inserted above and below the consonants.<sup>3</sup> In this orthographic reform he was prompted by the desire to prevent errors in the

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Sa'd, vol, v, pp. 262, 277; ibn-'Asakir, vol. iv, p. 80; Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 362; ibn-al-Jawzi, Sirat 'Umar ibn-' Abd-al-' Aziz (Cairo, 1331), pp. 88-9.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-al-Jawzi, pp. 99-100.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, Wafaydt al-A'yan (Cairo, 1299), vol. i, pp. 220-2; de Slane, Ibn Khallikari's Biographical Dictionary (Paris, 1843), vol. i, pp. 359-60; cf. Suyuh, Itqan, vol. ii, p. 171; Theodor Noldeke, Geschichte des Qorans (Gottingen, 1860), pp. 305-9; cf. G. C. Miles, Journal, Near East Studies, vol. viii (1948), pp. 236-42.

recitation of the sacred text, of which he evidently prepared a critical revision. He who started life as a schoolmaster never lost interest in literature and oratory. His patronage of poetry and science was notable. The Bedouin satirist Jarir, who with his rivals al-Farazdaq and al-Akhtal formed the poetical triumvirate of the Umayyad period, was his panegyrist as well as poet laureate of the Caliph 'Umar. His physician was a Christian named Tayadhuq.<sup>1</sup> The "slave of Thaqif", as he was dubbed by his 'Iraqi enemies, died in Wasit, June 714, at the age of fifty-three, leaving a name that is undoubtedly one of the greatest in the annals of Islam.

Architectural monuments

Among the outstanding achievements of the period were the many architectural monuments, some of which have survived to the present day.

In Palestine the Caliph Sulayman built on the ruins of a more ancient town the city of al-Ramlah,<sup>2</sup> which he made his residence. Traces of his palace could be seen there until the time of the first World War, and the minaret of his White Mosque (which after the Umayyad Mosque of Damascus and the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem became the third leading sanctuary of Syria) as rebuilt by the Mamluks in the early part of the fourteenth century is still standing. With Sulayman the imperial capital ceased to be the home of the caliphs. Hisham resided in al-Rusafah, a Roman settlement near al-Raqqah.<sup>3</sup> In 691 'Abd-al-Malik erected in Jerusalem the magnificent Dome of the Rock (Qubbat al-Sakhrah), wrongly styled by Europeans "the Mosque of 'Umar", in order to divert thither the pilgrimage from Makkah which was held by his rival ibn-al-Zubayr. That 'Abd-al-Malik was the builder is attested by the Kufic inscription still preserved round the dome. Over a century later the structure underwent restoration by the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Ma'mun (813-33), who unscrupulously substituted his own name for that of 'Abd-al-Malik but inadvertently forgot to change the date.<sup>4</sup> The 'Abbasid architect set close together the letters of the new name, crowding them into the narrow space originally occupied by the name of

<sup>1</sup> Or Tiyadhuq, Gr. Theodocus. Ibn-al-Tbri, p. 194.

<sup>2</sup> Baladhuri, p. 143= Hitti, p. 220.

<sup>8</sup> Identified by others with al-Hayr al-Sharqi, east of Palmyra.

\* The inscription in its present form runs as follows: Hath built this dome THE SERVANT OF GOD 'Abd[ULLAH AL-IMAM

AL-MA'MUN COMMANDER OF THE BELIEVERS IN THE YEAR TWO AND SEVENTY.—MAY GOD ACCEPT OF HIM AND favour him! Amen.

'Abd-al-Malik.<sup>1</sup> Close by the Dome and in the southern section of the sacred area 'Abd-al-Malik erected another mosque, possibly on the site of an earlier church. Local usage designates this mosque al-Masjid al-Aqsa (the farther mosque<sup>2</sup>), but the term is also used in a more general sense to include the whole collection of sacred buildings on that area. Al-Haram al-Sharif (the noble sanctuary) is another name for this group, only less sacred than the two Harams of Makkah and al-Madinah.

The greatest Umayyad builder, however, was al-Walid, son of 'Abd-al-Malik, whose rule was one of comparative peace and opulence. So great was this caliph's penchant for building that during his reign whenever people in Damascus met together fine buildings formed the chief topic of conversation, as cookery and the fair sex did under Sulayman, and religion and the Koran under 'Umar ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz.<sup>3</sup> This al-Walid, who lived only forty years, enlarged and beautified the great mosque of Makkah,<sup>4</sup> rebuilt that of al-Madinah, erected in Syria a number of schools and places of worship and endowed institutions for the lepers, the lame and the blind.<sup>5</sup> He was perhaps the first ruler in medieval times to build hospitals for persons with chronic diseases, and the many lazar houses which later grew up in the West followed the Moslem precedent.<sup>6</sup> From a church in Ba'labakk al-Walid removed a dome of gilded brass which he set over the dome of his father's mosque in Jerusalem. But his greatest accomplishment was the conversion in Damascus of the site of the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, which he seized from his Christian subjects, into one of the sublimest places of worship in the world. This Umayyad

Mosque is still considered the fourth holiest sanctuary of Islam, after the three Harams of Makkah, al-Madinah and Jerusalem. Before al-Walid the Moslems shared a part of the sacred enclosure with its Christian owners. To justify the seizure later tradition claimed that the eastern half of the city was captured by force and the western by capitulation and that the two Moslem contingents, each

<sup>1</sup> De Vogue, *Le temple de Jerusalem* (Paris, 1864), pp. 85-6, was the first to discover the falsification.

<sup>2</sup> From a reference to the site in Koran 17 : 1. Al-Buraq made a stop there. Fakhri, p. 173, makes al-Walid the builder of al-Aq\$a.

<sup>3</sup> Fakhri, p. 173; Tabari, vol. ii, pp. 1272-3.

<sup>4</sup> Baladhuri, p. 47 = Hitti, p. 76.

<sup>1</sup> Tabari, vol. ii, p. 1271, • ibn-al-Faqih, pp. 106-7.

<sup>1</sup> Consult Hitti, art. "Chivalry: Arabic", *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*.

without knowing w'hat the other had done, met in the metropolitan cathedral. The cathedral stood on the site of an earlier Roman temple almost in the centre of the town. Over the lintel of the southern portal of the enclosure, long since walled up, an ancient inscription in Greek can still be read: Thy kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations".<sup>13</sup>

Of the remaining caliphs in this period of Umayyad glory there is little to be said save of Umar II (7<sup>13</sup>7'-2°)

and Hishâm. 'Umar was entirely under the influence of the theologians and has enjoyed through the ages a reputation

for piety and asceticism that stands in glaring contrast with the alleged impiety of the Umayyad régime. He was, in fact, the Umayyad saint. To the later tradition, which expected a mab'ûth (one sent) to appear every hundred years to renovate Islam, he became the one sent “at the head” of the second century (A.H. 100), just as al-Shâfi'i stood “at the head” of the third. His biographer<sup>14</sup> tells us that 'Umar wore clothes with so many patches and mingled with his subjects on such free terms that when a stranger came to petition him he would find it difficult to recognize the caliph. When one of his agents wrote that his fiscal reforms in favour of new converts would deplete the treasury 'Umar replied, “Glad would I be, by Allah, to see everybody become Moslem, so that thou and I would have to till the soil with our own hands to earn a living.”<sup>15</sup> 'Umar discontinued the practice established in the time of Mu'âwiyah of cursing \*Ali from the pulpit at the Friday prayers.<sup>16 17</sup> The piety of 'Umar, who died at the age of thirty-nine, saved his grave from the desecration which was visited by the 'Abbâsids upon the other tombs of the preceding dynasty.

With Hishâm (724-43), the fourth son of \*Abd-al-Malik, the Umayyad golden age came to a close. After Mu'âwiyah and •Abd-al-Malik, Hishâm was rightly considered by Arab authorities the third and last statesman of the house of Umayyah.<sup>18</sup> When his young son Mu'âwiyah, ancestor of the Spanish Umayyads, fell from his horse while hunting and was killed, the father's comment was, “I brought him up for the caliphate and he pursues a fox!”<sup>1</sup> His governor of al-'Iraq, Khalid ibn-'Abdullah al-Qasri, under whom the region prospered especially through the engineering and drainage works of Hassan al-Nabati, appropriated for himself a surplus of 13,000,000 dirhams after squandering revenue to nearly three times that sum.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently Khalid met the same fate that befell others like him—he was apprehended in 738,



jailed, tortured and required to give an account of the state moneys and make repayments. His case is only one illustration of that maladministration and corruption in the body politic which helped to undermine the Umayyad throne and render its occupants an easy prey for their 'Abbasid rivals.

<sup>1</sup> Tabari, vol. ii, pj5. 1738-9.

<sup>2</sup> Tabari, vol. ii, p. 1642; Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 387.



By courtesy of E. T. Newell From "Numismatic Notes and Monographs No. 87 {New York, 1939).

## A BYZANTINE WEIGHT VALIDATED

BY AL-WALID (f 715)

Bearing on the obverse a cross with the inscription fB, i.e. two ounces, and on the reverse a Kufic inscription stating that the caliph has recognized this as equivalent to two ivuqtyahs. Probably the earliest inscribed Moslem weight thus far found.

## CHAPTER XX

## POLITICAL ADMINISTRATION AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS UNDER THE Umayyads

The administrative divisions of the empire in Umayyad and even 'Abbasid times corresponded in general to the provinces of the preceding Byzantine and Persian empires. They comprised: (1) Syria-Palestine; (2) al-Kufah, including al-'Iraq; (3) al-Basrah with Persia, Sijistan, Khurasan, al-Bahrayn, 'Uman and probably Najd and al-Yamamah; (4) Armenia; (5) al-Hijaz; (6) Karman and the frontier districts of India; (7) Egypt; (8) Ifnqiyah; (9) al-Yaman and the rest of South Arabia.<sup>1</sup> Gradually combinations were made and five viceroyalties resulted. Mu'awiyah combined al-Basrah and al-Kufah into one viceroyalty,<sup>2</sup> that of al-'Iraq, which included most of Persia and eastern Arabia and had al-Kufah for its capital. Later the viceroy of al-'Iraq was to have a deputy governor for Khurasan and Transoxiana, usually residing at Marw, and another for Sind and Panjab. Likewise al-Hijaz, al-Yaman and Central Arabia were combined into another viceroyalty. Al-Jazirah (the northern part of the land between the Tigris and Euphrates) with Armenia, Adharbayjan and parts of eastern Asia Minor formed the third. Lower and Upper Egypt constituted the fourth. Ifnqiyah, which embraced northern Africa west of Egypt, Spain, Sicily and other adjacent islands formed the fifth viceroyalty with al-Qayrawan as its seat of government.

The threefold governmental function of political administration, tax collection and religious leadership was now directed as a rule by three different officials. The viceroy {amir, sahib'} would appoint his own 'amil (agent, prefect) over any particular district and simply forward the name to the caliph. Under Hisham (724-43) we find the newly appointed governor of Armenia and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ibn-Khaldun, vol. iii, pp. 4, 10, 15, 17, 134-41; Alfred von Kremer, *Cultur-geschichte des Orients unter den Chalifen*, vol. i (Vienna, 1875), pp. 162-3.

<sup>1</sup> Ya'qubi, vol ii, p. 272.

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Adharbayjan remaining in Damascus and sending a naib (accredited deputy) in his stead. The viceroy had full charge of political and military administration in his province, but quite often the revenues were under a special officer, *sahib al-kharaj*, responsible directly to the caliph. Mu'awiyah was apparently the first to appoint such an officer, whom he sent to al-Kufah.<sup>1</sup> Previously the government of a province in the Moslem empire had meant chiefly its financial administration.

The revenue of the state was derived from the same sources as under the orthodox caliphate, chief among which was tribute from subject peoples. In the provinces all expenses of local administration, state annuities, soldiers' stipends and miscellaneous services were met from the local income, and only the balance went to the caliphal treasury. Muawiyah's measure of deducting the *zakah*, about 2½ per cent., from the fixed annuities of the Moslems,<sup>2</sup> bears a close resemblance to the income tax of a modern state.

The judiciary had to do with Moslems only, all non-Moslems being allowed autonomy under their own religious heads. This explains why there were judges only in large cities. The Prophet and the early caliphs administered justice in person, as did their generals and prefects in the provinces, for the various functions of government were as yet undifferentiated. The first purely judicial officials in the provinces received their appointment from the governors. Under the 'Abbasids appointment by the caliphs became

more common. Tradition, however, credits 'Umar with having appointed a judge (tqadi") over Egypt as early as A.H. 23 (643).<sup>3</sup> After 661 we find in that country a regular series of judges succeeding one another. They were always recruited from the faqlh class, whose members were scholars learned in the Koran and Moslem tradition. Besides deciding cases they administered pious foundations (waqf) and the estates of orphans and imbeciles.

Discovering that some of his signed correspondence was being forged, Mu'awiyah created a bureau of registry,<sup>4</sup> a kind of state chancery, whose duty it was to make and preserve one copy of

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khaldun, vol. iii, p. 4, 1. 24.  
276, 1. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p.

\* Al-Kindi, Kitab al-Wulah, ed. R. Guest (Beirut, 1908), pp. 300-301. See also ibn-Qutaybah, 'Uy tin al-Akhbar, vol. i, p. 61.

<sup>4</sup> Diwan al-khatim, "bureau of the signet". Tabari, vol. ii, pp. 205-6; Fakhri p. 149.

each official document before sealing and dispatching the original. By the time of \*Abd-al-Malik the Umayyads had developed a state archive in Damascus.<sup>19</sup>

## Military organization

The Umayyad army was modelled in its general organization after that of the Byzantines. The division was into five corps: centre, two wings, vanguard and rearguard. The formation as of old was in lines. This general plan continued until the time of the last caliph, Marwan II (744-50), who abandoned the old division and introduced the small

compact body of troops called kurdiis (cohort).<sup>20</sup> In outfit and armour the Arab warrior was hard to distinguish from the Greek. The weapons were essentially the same. The cavalry used plain and rounded saddles not unlike those of the Byzantines and precisely like the ones still in fashion in the Near East. The heavy artillery was represented by the ballista (<sup>^</sup>arradah), the mangonel {manjanlq) and the batteringram (dabbabah, kabsh). Such heavy engines and siege machines together with the baggage were carried on camels behind the army.

The forces kept at Damascus were chiefly Syrians and Syrian-ized Arabians. Al-Basrah and al-Kufah were the main recruiting grounds for the army of all the eastern provinces. Under the Sufyanids the standing army numbered 60,000, entailing a yearly expenditure of 60,000,000 dirhams, including family stipends.<sup>21</sup> Yazid III (744) reduced all annuities by 10 per cent, and thereby won the sobriquet naqis (diminisher, also deficient).<sup>22</sup> Under the last Umayyad the army is said to have reached 120,000,<sup>23</sup> a figure which is probably a mistake for 12,000.

The arab navy was likewise an imitation of the Byzantine model. The fighting unit was a galley with a minimum of twenty-five seats on each of the two lower decks. Each seat held two men, and the hundred or more rowers in each ship were armed. But those who specialized in fighting took up their positions on the upper deck.

### Royal life

The evenings of the caliphs were set apart for entertainment and social intercourse. Mu'awiyah was particularly fond of

CH. xx SOCIAL CONDITIONS UNDER THE Umayyads listening to historical narratives and anecdotes, preferably

South Arabian, and poetical recitations. To satisfy this desire he imported from al-Yaman a story-teller, \*Abld ibn-Sharyah, who entertained the caliph through many long nights with tales of the heroes of the past. The favourite drink was rose sherbet, celebrated in Arabic song<sup>24</sup> and still enjoyed in Damascus and other Eastern towns. It was relished particularly by the women.

Mu awiyah's son Yazid was the first confirmed drunkard among the caliphs and won the title Yazid al-khumur, the Yazid of wines.<sup>25</sup> One of his pranks was the training of a pet monkey, abu-Qays, to participate in his drinking bouts.<sup>26</sup> Yazid, we are told, drank daily, whereas al-Walid I contented himself with drinking every other day; Hisham, once every Friday after the divine service, and <sup>e</sup>Abd-al-Malik only once a month, but then so heavily that he perforce disburdened himself by the use of emetics.<sup>27</sup> Yazid II felt such attachment to two of his singing girls, Sallamah and Hababah, that when the latter was choked on a grape which he playfully threw into her mouth the passionate young caliph fretted himself to death.<sup>28</sup> But the palm for drinking should be handed to his son al-Walid II (743~4-) > an incorrigible libertine, who is said to have gone swimming habitually in a pool of wine of which he would gulp enough to lower the surface appreciably.<sup>29</sup> Al-Walid is reported to have opened the Koran one day, and as his eye fell upon the verse "And every froward potentate was brought to naught",<sup>30</sup> he shot the sacred book to pieces with his bow and arrow, meanwhile repeating in defiance two verses of his own composition.<sup>31</sup>

This caliph spent his time in his desert castles, one of which stood by al-Qaryatayn, midway between Damascus and Palmyra. The Aghanz\* has preserved for us an eye-witness's report of one of his debauched drinking parties. As always,

dancing, singing and music served as the handmaids of drinking. When the caliph was one of those who maintained reasonable self-respect he screened himself behind curtains which separated him from the entertainers. Otherwise, as in the case of al-Walid, he joined the party on a footing of equality.<sup>1</sup>

' Vol. ii, p. 72.

Such festivities as these were nevertheless not entirely lacking in cultural value. They undoubtedly encouraged the development of poetry, music and the esthetic side of life in general and were not always mere orgies.

Among the more innocent and fashionable pastimes which engaged the interest of the caliphs and their courtiers were hunting, horse-racing and dicing. Polo, which became a favourite sport under the 'Abbasids, was probably introduced from Persia towards the end of the Umayyad period, and cock-fights at the time were not infrequent. The chase was a sport early developed in Arabia, where the saluki (saluqi, from Saluq in al-Yaman) dog was at first exclusively used. The cheetah (JahcT) came on the scene later. Legend makes Kulayb ibn-Rabfah, hero of the War of Basus, the first Arabian to use it in hunting. The Persians and Indians had trained this animal long before the Arabians. Yazid I, son of Mu'awiyah, was the first great hunter in Islam and the first who trained the cheetah to ride on the croup of a horse. He adorned his hunting dogs with gold anklets and assigned to each a special slave.<sup>2</sup> Horse-racing was extremely popular among the Umayyads. Al-Walid, son of \*Abd-al-Malik, was one of the first caliphs to institute and patronize public races.<sup>3</sup> His brother and successor, Sulayman, had just completed arrangements for a national competition in horse-racing when death overtook him.<sup>4</sup> In one of the courses organized by their brother

Hisham the number of racers from the royal and other stables reached 4000, “ which finds no parallel in pre-Islamic or Islamic annals”.<sup>5</sup> A favourite daughter of this caliph kept horses for racing.<sup>6</sup>

The ladies of the royal household seem to have enjoyed a relatively high degree of freedom. A Makkan poet, abu-Dahbal al-Jumahi, did not hesitate to address love poems to \*Atikah, the beautiful daughter of Mu'awiyah, of whom he had caught a glimpse through the lifted veils and curtains as she was on a pil-

<sup>1</sup> Al-Jahiz, al-Tajfi Akhlaq al-Muluk, ed. Ahmad Zaki (Cairo, 1914), p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Fakhri, p. 76.  
13-17.

<sup>8</sup> Mas'udi, vol. vi, pp.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-al-Jawzi, Sirat 'Umar, p. 56.  
466.

' Mas'udi, vol. v, p.

- Kitab al- Uy in (1865), p. 69, 1. 12.

grimage and whom he later followed to her father's capital. The caliph had at last to “cut off the tongue of the poet” by offering him a subsidy and finding him a suitable wife.<sup>1</sup> Another poet, the handsome Waddah al-Yaman, ventured to make love to one of the wives of al-Walid I in Damascus in spite of the threats of the caliph, and finally paid for his audacity with his life.<sup>2</sup> The influence exercised by the shrewd and pretty 'Atikah, grand-daughter of Mu'awiyah, over her husband-caliph, \*Abd-al-Malik, may be illustrated by the story which tells how she locked her door when angry with the caliph and refused to open it until a favourite courtier came weeping and falsely said that one of his two sons had killed the other and that the caliph was intent



on executing the fratricide.<sup>3</sup> The harem system, with its concomitant auxiliary of eunuchs, was not, it seems, fully instituted until the time of al-Walid II.<sup>4</sup> The first eunuchs were mostly Greeks and were evidently introduced into the Arab world following the Byzantine precedent.<sup>5</sup>

It is safe to assume that Damascus has not much changed its The general tone of life and character since its days as the Umayyad <sup>capital</sup> capital. Then, as now, in the narrow, covered streets the Damascene with his wide trousers, red pointed shoes and huge turban could be seen rubbing shoulders with the sun-tanned Bedouin in his loose gown surmounted by kufiyah (head shawl) and 'iqal (head band) and occasionally meeting a European-dressed Ifranji\* Here and there the aristocrat, the well-to-do Damascene, might be seen on horseback cloaked in a white silk 'aba and armed with a sword or lance. A few women, and those all veiled, cross the streets; others stealthily peep through the latticed windows of their homes overlooking the bazaars and public squares. Sherbet sellers and sweetmeat vendors raise their voices to the highest pitch in competition with the incessant tramp of the passers-by and the multitude of donkeys and camels laden with the varied products of the desert and the sown. The city atmosphere is charged with every kind of smell which the olfactory sense is capable of perceiving.

<sup>1</sup> Aghani, vol. vi, pp. 158-61.  
vol. xi, p. 49.

\* Ibid. pp. 36 seq.,

<sup>3</sup> Mas'udi, vol. v, pp. 273-

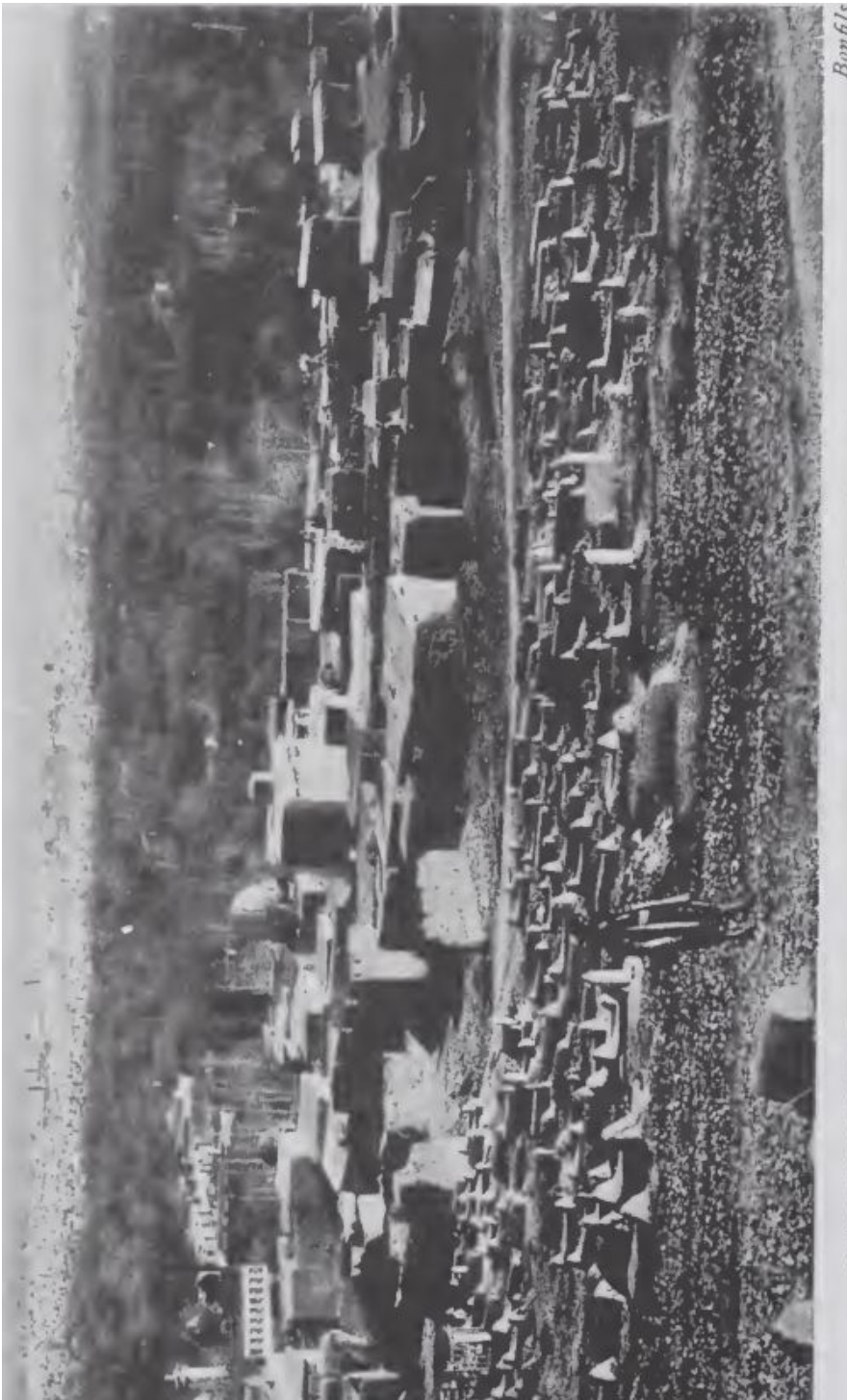
5.

<sup>4</sup> Aghani, vol. iv, pp. 78-9.

<sup>5</sup> J. B. Bury, The Imperial Administrative System in the Ninth Century (London, 1911), pp. 120 seq.\ Charles

Diehl, Byzance: grandeur et decadence (Paris, 1919), P-154.

- Ah rank, a word used for all Europeans; especially common during the Crusade«





## DAMASCUS TODAY, AS SEEN FROM AL-SALIHIAH

As in other cities the Arabians lived in separate quarters of their own according to their tribal affiliation. In Damascus, Hirs, Aleppo (Halab) and other towns these *hârahs* (quarters) are still well marked. The doorway of each house opened from the street into a courtyard in the centre of which usually stood a large water-basin with a flowing jet emitting from time to time a veil-like spray. An orange or citron tree grew by the basin. The rooms surrounded the courtyard, which in larger houses was provided with a cloister. It is to the eternal glory of the *banu-Umayyah* that they supplied Damascus with a water system which was unexcelled in the contemporary Orient and still continues to function. Yazīd's name is borne today by a canal, *Nahr Yazīd*, which this son of *Mu'awiyah* dug from the *Barada*, or more probably widened,<sup>1</sup> in order to perfect the irrigation of the *Ghūtah*. This rich oasis outside Damascus with its luxurious gardens owes its very existence to the *Barada*. Besides the *Nahr Yazid*, the *Barada* sends off four other arms or channels which spread fertility and freshness throughout the town.

The population throughout the empire was divided into four Society social classes. The highest consisted naturally of the ruling Moslems headed by the caliphal household and the aristocracy of Arabian conquerors. Exactly how numerous was this class cannot be ascertained. Under *al-Walīd I* the number of annuities apportioned to Arabian Moslems in

Damascus and its district (jund) reached 45,000? Under Marwân I, Hirs and its district registered 20,000 pensions. The number of converted Moslems could not have been great before the restrictions imposed by 'Umar II. Although the capital of the caliphate may have presented by the end of the Umayyad period the aspect of a Moslem town, Syria as a whole remained largely Christian until the third Moslem century. The small towns and villages and especially the mountainous regions—always the home of the lost cause — preserved their native features and ancient cultural patterns. In fact the Lebanon remained Christian in faith and Syriac in speech for centuries after the conquest. Only the physical conflict had ended with the conquest; the religious, the racial,

<sup>1</sup> Consult Istakhri, p. 59; cf. H. Sauvaire, "Description de Damas: 'Oyoûn et-Tawârîkh, par Mohammad ebn Châker", *Journal asiatique*, ser. 9, vol. vii (1896), p. 400.

<sup>2</sup> Consult H. Lammens, *La Syrie: précis historique* (Beirut, 1921), vol. i, pp. 119-20.

the social and above all the linguistic conflicts were just beginning.

## Clients

Next below the Arabian Moslems came the Neo-Moslems, who by force or persuasion had professed Islam and were thereby admitted in theory, though not in practice, to the full rights of Islamic citizenship. Here Arabian chauvinism, pitted against theoretical claims, proved too strong for those claims to be realized. There is no doubt that throughout practically all the period of the Umayyads, holders of land, whether believers or unbelievers, were made to pay kharaj (land tax). There is no evidence of mass conversion to Islam

in the provinces until after such stringent regulations as those of 'Umar II and the 'Abbasid al-Mutawakkil (847-61). In Egypt resistance to the new religion was always least obstinate. The revenue of that country was reduced from fourteen million dinars in the time of 'Amr ibn-al-<sup>c</sup> As to five in the time of Mu'awiyah and later to four under the 'Abbasid Harun al-Rashid (786-809).<sup>32</sup> In al-Traq it fell from a hundred million under 'Umar ibn-al-Khattab to forty million in the days of \*Abd-al-Malik.<sup>33</sup> One of the causes for the decline of state revenue was undoubtedly conversion to Islam. Under the early 'Abbasids, the Egyptians, Persians and Aramaeans who had accepted Islam began to outnumber the Moslems of Arabian origin.

Reduced to the position of clients (mawalif these neophyte Moslems formed the lowest stratum of Moslem society, a status which they bitterly resented. This explains our finding them in many cases espousing such causes as the Shi'ite in al-'Iraq or the Kharijite in Persia. Some of them, however, as often happens, proved religiously “more royal than the king”, and their zeal for the new faith, bordering on fanaticism, made them persecute non-Moslems. Among the most intolerant early Moslems were some of these converts from Christianity and Judaism.

Within the Moslem society these clients were naturally the first to devote themselves to learned studies and fine arts, for they represented the longer tradition of culture. As they outshone the Moslem Arabians in the intellectual field they began to contest with them the political leadership. Through their intermarriages

CH. xx SOCIAL CONDITIONS UNDER THE Umayyads with the conquering stock they served to dilute the Arabian blood and ultimately make that element inconspicuous amidst the mixture of varied racial strains.

The third class was made up of members of tolerated sects, *Dhimmis* professors of revealed religions, the so-called *ahi al-dhimmah*, i.e. the Christians, Jews and *Sâbians* with whom the Moslems had made covenant. The *Sâbians*, who were identical with the Mandeans, the so-called Christians of St. John who still survive in the marshy district at the mouth of the Euphrates, are mentioned thrice in the Koran (2 : 59, 5 : 73, 22 : 17). From this it would appear that Muhammad regarded them as believers in the true God. This recognition of tolerated religions, whose devotees were to be disarmed and compelled to pay tribute in return for Moslem protection, was the chief political innovation of Muhammad and was largely due to the esteem in which the Prophet held the Bible and partly to the aristocratic connections of the *banu-Ghassân*, *Bakr*, *Taghlib* and other Christian tribes.

In this status the *dhimmis* enjoyed, against the payment of land and capitation taxes, a wide measure of toleration. Even in matters of civil and criminal judicial procedure, except where a Moslem was involved, these people were practically under their own spiritual heads. Moslem law was too sacred to be applicable to *tojrhem*. Essential parts of this system were still in force as late as the Ottoman period and the mandatory regimes of 'Iraq, Syria and Palestine.

Originally confined to the *ahi al-kitâb* (Scripturaries) of the Koran<sup>1</sup> who came under the rule of Islam, the tolerated status was later extended by the Moslems to include the fire-worshipping Zoroastrians (*Majüsj*, the heathen of Harran and the pagan Berbers. Though not devotees of a revealed religion and thus technically outside the pale of protection, the Persian Zoroastrians and the North African Berbers were offered by the Moslem invaders the three choices: Islam, the sword or tribute, rather than the first two only. Here, where the sword of Islam was not long enough to reach all the necks involved, technicality gave way to expediency. In such

inaccessible regions as the Lebanon the Christians remained always in the ascendant and defied even <sup>f</sup>Abd-al-Malik at the height of the Umayyad caliphate.<sup>2</sup> Throughout all Syria the Christians were well treated under the

<sup>1</sup> Sûrs. 9 : 29; 2 : 99, 103; 3 : 62-65, etc.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 205.

banu-Umayyah until the reign of the pious 'Umar II. As we have already learned, Mu'awiyah's wife was a Christian, as were his poet, physician and secretary of finance. We read of only one conspicuous exception, that of al-Walid I, who put to death the chief of the Christian Arab tribe of the banu-Taghlib for refusing to profess Islam.<sup>1</sup> Even in Egypt Copts rose several times against their Moslem overlords before they finally succumbed in the days of the 'Abbasid al-Ma'mun (813-33).<sup>2</sup>

### "The Covenant of 'Umar"

The fame of 'Umar II does not rest solely on his piety or on his remission of taxes imposed on neophyte Moslems. 'Umar was the first caliph and the only Umayyad to impose humiliating restrictions on Christian subjects—measures wrongly ascribed to his earlier namesake and maternal great-grandfather, 'Umar I. This so-called "covenant of 'Umar", implying 'Umar I, is recorded in several forms,<sup>3</sup> mostly in later sources; and the provisions presuppose closer intercourse between Moslems and Christians than was possible in the early days of the conquest. The most striking regulations issued by this Umayyad caliph were the excluding of Christians from public offices, prohibiting their wearing turbans, requiring them to cut their forelocks, to don distinctive clothes with girdles of leather, to ride without saddles or only on pack saddles, to erect no places of worship and not to lift their voices in time of prayer.

According to his decree if a Moslem killed a Christian his penalty was only a fine and no Christian's testimony against a Moslem in courts could be accepted. The Jews were evidently also included under some of these restrictions and excluded from governmental positions.<sup>4</sup> That many of these enactments were not long in force is indicated by the fact that Khalid ibn-'Abdullah al-Qasri, governor of al-Traq under Hisham, built a church in al-Kufah to please his Christian mother,<sup>5</sup> granted Christians and Jews the privilege of building places of worship and even appointed Zoroastrians to posts in the government.

<sup>1</sup> Aghani, vol. x, p. 99. H. Lammens in *Journal asiatique*, ser. 9, vol. iv (1894), pp. 438-9.

<sup>2</sup> Kindi, pp. 73, 81, 96, 116, 117; Maqrizi, *Khi tat* (Bulaq, 1270), vol. ii, p. 497.

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, pp. 151-2; ibn-'Asakir, vol. i, pp. 178-80; al-Ibshihi, *al-Mustatraf* (Cairo, 1314), vol. i, pp. 100-101.

<sup>4</sup> Abu-Yusuf, *Kharaj*, pp. 152-3; ibn-al-Jawzi, *Sirat 'Umar*, p. 100; 'Iqd, vol. ii, pp. 339-40; ibn-al-Athir, vol. v, p. 49; A. S. Tritton, *The Caliphs and their non-Muslim Subjects* (Oxford, 1930), pp. 5-35.

Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 302 = de Slane, vol. i, p. 485.

At the bottom of society stood the slaves.<sup>1</sup> Islam preserved the ancient Semitic institution of slavery, the legality of which the Old Testament admitted, but it appreciably ameliorated the condition of the slave. Canon law forbade the Moslem to enslave his co-religionist, but promised no liberty to an alien slave who adopted Islam. Slaves in early Islam were recruited from prisoners of war, including women and children, unless ransomed, and by purchase or raiding.



Soon the slave trade became very brisk and lucrative in all Moslem lands. Some slaves from East or Central Africa were black; others from Farghanah or Chinese Turkestan were yellow; still others from the Near East or from eastern and southern Europe were white. The Spanish slaves, called Saqalibah<sup>1</sup> from Spanish esclavo, fetched about a thousand dinars each, while Turkish slaves fetched only six hundred apiece. According to Islamic law the offspring of a female slave by another slave, by any man other than her master, or by her master in case he does not acknowledge the fatherhood of the child, is likewise a slave; but the offspring of a male slave by a free woman is free.

An idea of the number of slaves flooding the Moslem empire as a result of conquest may be gained from such exaggerated figures, as the following: Musa ibn-Nusayr took 300,000 captives from Ifriqiyah, one-fifth of whom he forwarded to al-Walid,<sup>3</sup> and from the Gothic nobility in Spain he captured 30,000 virgins;<sup>4</sup> Qutaybah's captives from Sogdiana alone numbered 100,000;<sup>6</sup> al-Zubayr ibn-al-'Awwam bequeathed among other chattels one thousand male and female slaves.<sup>6</sup> The famous Makkan poet of love, 'Umar ibn-abi-Rabi'ah (f ca. 719), had many more than seventy slaves.<sup>7</sup> For an Umayyad prince to maintain a retinue of about a thousand slaves was nothing extraordinary. Even the private in the Syrian army at the battle of Siffin had from one to ten servants waiting on him.<sup>8</sup>

Between the master and the female slave concubinage, but not legal marriage, was permissible. The children of such a union

<sup>1</sup> Ar. 'abd (pl. 'abid\ especially if black; otherwise mamluk (pl. mamalik'), possessed.

<sup>2</sup> Same term used by the Arabs for the Slavs. See below, p. 525.

<sup>3</sup> Maqqari, vol. i, p. 148.  
iv, p. 448.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. vol. iv, p. 454.  
254.

• Mas'udi, vol. iv, p.

<sup>7</sup> Aghdni, vol. i, p. 37.

<sup>8</sup> Mas'udi, vol. iv, p. 387. Consult Jurji Zaydan, Ta'rikh al-Tamaddun ah Islami, 3rd ed. (Cairo, 1922), vol. v, pp. 22 scq.

belonged to the master and were therefore free; but the status of the concubine was thereby raised only to that of umm-walad (mother of children), who could neither be sold by her husbandmaster nor given away and who at his death was declared free. In the melting-pot process which resulted in the amalgamation of Arabians and foreigners, the slave trade undoubtedly played an extremely important role.

The liberation of slaves was always looked upon as a good work {qurbah) entitling the master to a special reward in the next world. When liberated the slave enjoyed the status of a client to his former master, now his patron. In case the patron died without heirs the client inherited his estate.

Al

ivi adlnah and Makkah

The quiet life of al-Madmah, rendered venerable by its early Moslem association, attracted thither would-be scholars devoted to the study of the mementos of its sacred past and to the collecting of legal and ritual enactments. The city

containing the burial-place of the Prophet thus became the first centre of Islamic tradition, which under such men as Anas ibn-Malik (f between 709 and 711) and 'Abdullah ibn-'Umar ibn-al-Khattab<sup>1</sup> (f 693) developed into a science of the first order.

The school of Makkah owes its reputation to 'Abdullah ibn-al-\*Abbas, surnamed abu-al-'Abbas (f ca. 688), a cousin of the Prophet and ancestor of the 'Abbasid caliphs, a man who was so universally admired for his knowledge of profane and sacred tradition and jurisprudence and for his skill in commenting on the Koran that he won the enviable title of hibr al-ummah (the sage of the community). Modern criticism, however, has exposed him as a fabricator of several hadlths.

Under the Umayyads the two cities of al-H ijaz entirely changed their aspect. To al-Madmah, the forsaken capital of Arabia, now retired many of those anxious to keep aloof from the turmoil of political activity or desirous of enjoying undisturbed the great fortunes which the .wars of conquest had gained for them. Following al-Hasan and al-Husayn, a large number of nouveaux riches flocked there. Inside the city arose palaces and outside ii villas, all swarming with servants and slaves and providing their occupants with every variety of luxury.<sup>2</sup> Makkah shared with its

<sup>1</sup> Eldest son of the second caliph. As a traditionist he is considered more reliable than ibn-Malik, whose collection has been preserved in the diusnad of Ahmad ibn-Hanbal.

<sup>2</sup> Mas'udi, vol. iv, pp. 254-5.

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sister city this attractiveness for lovers of pleasure. As life in

the two cities became more luxurious its excesses became more notorious.<sup>1</sup> Pilgrims from all over the Moslem world brought every year vast fresh supplies of money. What a contrast to the primitive times when the Caliph 'Umar's agent arrived from al-Bahrayn claiming to be the bearer of tribute amounting to 500,000 dirhams! The caliph questioned the possibility of such a figure, and when doubly assured that it was "a hundred thousand five times", he summoned the people and proclaimed, "O ye men, we have just received an enormous sum. If ye wish we shall give each his share by measure, otherwise by count."<sup>2</sup>

With this increased flow of wealth the two Holy Cities became less holy. They developed into a centre of worldly pleasure and gaiety and a home of secular Arab music and song. In Makkah was established a kind of clubhouse patronized by guests who, we are told, had facilities for hanging their outer garments on pegs—apparently an innovation for al-Hijaz—before indulging in chess, backgammon, dice or reading.<sup>3</sup> To al-Madinah Persian and Byzantine slave songstresses (giyan) flocked in increasing numbers. Amorous poetry kept pace with other new developments. Houses of ill repute (buyilt al-qiyān') flourished in al-Madīnah and were patronized by no less a poet than al-Farazdaq of national fame.<sup>4</sup> As these female slaves sang and played soft melodies for the entertainment of their wealthy masters and guests, the latter, attired in colourful robes, reclined on square mattresses or cushions while they inhaled the perfume of burning spices and sipped from silver goblets the ruddy wines of Syria.

Al-Madinah boasted under the early Marwanids the proud and beautiful Sayyidah<sup>5</sup> Sukaynah (f 735), daughter of the martyred al-Husayn and granddaughter of 'Ali, one of the most remarkable women of the age.

Sukaynah's rank and learning combined with her fondness for song and poetry and her charm, good taste and quick-wittedness to make her the arbiter of fashion, beauty and literature in the region of the sacred cities. Sukaynah was noted for her jests and hoaxes.<sup>6</sup> The crude humour appreciated even in the high society of the time is illustrated by the occasion when she <sup>1</sup> Aghani, vol. xxi, p. 197. ' Ibn-Sa'd, vol. iii, pt. 1, p. 216.

<sup>3</sup> Aghani, vol. iv, p. 52; cf. below, p. 339. <sup>4</sup> Ibid. vol xxi, p. 197.

<sup>5</sup> "Lady", a title originally reserved for the descendants of 'Ali and Fatimah.

• Aghdni, vol. xiv, pp. 164-5; vol. <sup>xv</sup>ii, PP- 97 > <sup>101</sup> \*2\_

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made an old Persian sheikh sit on a basket of eggs and cluck like a hen, to the merriment of her incoming guests. On another she sent word to the chief of police that a Syrian had broken into her apartment; when the chief himself and his aide arrived in haste they found her maid holding a flea.<sup>1</sup> Then as now Syria was evidently noted for its fleas. The brilliant assemblies of poets and jurists held in her residence, a sort of salon, never failed to be enlivened by her sallies of repartee. Special pride she took in her ancestry, in her daughter, whom she liked to bedeck with jewels, and in her own hair, which she had her own peculiar way of dressing. This coiffure a la Sukaynah (turrah Sukaymyali')<sup>i</sup> became popular among men and was at a later date strictly prohibited by the puritan Caliph 'Umar II,<sup>3</sup> one of whose brothers had married Sukaynah without consummating the union. As for the successive husbands whom the charms of this lady captivated for a longer or

shorter period, they could hardly be counted on the fingers of two hands.<sup>4</sup> In more than one instance she made complete freedom of action a condition precedent to marriage.

Sukaynah had a rival in al-Ta\*if, the famous summer resort of Makkah and al-Madinah, whose patricians witnessed a number of striking scenes and episodes centring on young 'A'ishah bint-Talhah. 'A'ishah's father was a distinguished Companion of the Prophet; her mother was a daughter of abu-Bakr and sister of 'A'ishah, Muhammad's favourite wife. This daughter of Talhah combined with noble descent a rare beauty and a proud and lofty spirit—the three qualities most highly prized in a woman by the Arabs. No favour she requested could very well be refused. Her appearance in public was even more impressive than that of Sukaynah.<sup>5</sup> Once when she was on a pilgrimage to Makkah she asked the master of ceremonies, who was also the governor of the town, to defer the public religious service until she had completed the last of the seven prescribed processions around the Ka'bah. This the gallant governor of course did, which resulted in his dismissal from office by the Caliph 'Abd-al-Malik.<sup>6</sup> 'A'ishah's record of marriages included

<sup>1</sup> Aghani, vol. xiv, p. 166; vol. xvii, p. 94.      \* Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 377.

' Aghani, vol. xiv, p. 165.

<sup>4</sup> Compare their lists in ibn-Sa'd, vol. viii, p. 349; ibn-Qutaybah, Ma'arif, pp. 101, 109-iq, 113, 122, 289-90; ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 377; Aghani, vol. xiv, pp. 168-72.

• Aghani, vol. x, p. 60.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. vol. iii, p. 103.

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only three.<sup>1</sup> When her second husband, Mus'ab ibn-al-Zubayr, who had also married Sukaynah and is said to have given each a million dirhams as dowry,<sup>2</sup> took her to task for never veiling her face her characteristic reply was, "Since God, may He remain blessed and exalted, hath put upon me the stamp of beauty, it is my wish that the public should view that beauty and thereby recognize His grace unto them. Under no conditions, therefore, will I veil myself."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Sa'd, vol. viii, p. 342.

<sup>1</sup> Aghani, vol. iii, p. 122»

' Ibid vol. x, p. 54.

## CHAPTER XXI

### INTELLECTUAL ASPECTS OF LIFE UNDER THE Umayyads

The invaders from the desert brought with them no tradition of learning, no heritage of culture, to the lands they conquered. In Syria, in Egypt, in al-Traq, in Persia, they sat as pupils at the feet of the peoples they subdued. And what acquisitive pupils they proved to be!

The closeness of the Umayyad period to the Jahillyah age, its many wars, civil and foreign, and the unsettled social and economic conditions of the Moslem world—all these militated against the possibility of intellectual development in that early epoch. But the seed was then sown and the tree of knowledge which came into full bloom under the early 'Abbasids in Baghdad certainly had its roots in this preceding period of Greek, Syrian and Persian culture. The Umayyad age, therefore, was in general one of incubation.

As Persians, Syrians, Copts, Berbers and others flocked within the fold of Islam and intermarried with the Arabians

the original high wall raised earlier between Arabians and non-Arabians tumbled down. The nationality of the Moslem receded into the background. No matter what his nationality may originally have been, the follower of Muhammad now passed for an Arab. An Arab henceforth became one who professed Islam and spoke and wrote the Arabic tongue, regardless of his racial affiliation. This is one of the most significant facts in the history of Islamic civilization. When we therefore speak of "Arab medicine" or "Arab philosophy" or "Arab mathematics" we do not mean the medical science, philosophy or mathematics that are necessarily the product of the Arabian mind or developed by people living in the Arabian peninsula, but that body of knowledge enshrined in books written in the Arabic language by men who flourished chiefly during the caliphate and were themselves Persians, Syrians, Egyptians or Arabians, Christian, Jewish or Moslem,

and who may have drawn some of their material from Greek, Aramaean, Indo-Persian or other sources.

As the two sister cities of al-Hijaz, Makkah and al-Madinah, Ai-Baṭrah became under the Umayyads the home of music and song, love <sup>and</sup> <sup>al</sup> and poetry, so did the twin cities of al-Iraq, al-Basrah<sup>34 35</sup> and al-Kufah, develop during this period into centres of the most animated intellectual activity in the Moslem world.

These two capitals of al-Iraq, as we have learned before, were Arabic originally military camps built by order of the Caliph 'Umar in the Moslem year 17 (638). Al-Kufah, the former capital of 'Ali, arose not far from the ruins of ancient Babylon and in a sense fell heir to its neighbour, al-Hirah, the Lakhmid capital. Through favoured location, commerce and immigration the sister towns soon grew into wealthy and populous cities of over a hundred thousand



inhabitants. Al-Basrah, from which Khurasan was governed under the Umayyads, is said to have reached as early as the year 50 (670) a total population of 300,000 and to have had at a later date 120,000 (!) canals.<sup>36</sup> Here on the borderland of Persia the scientific study of the Arabic language and grammar was begun and carried on mainly for foreign converts and partly by them. The first impulse came from the desire to supply the linguistic needs of Neo-Moslems who wanted to study the Koran, hold government positions and converse with the conquerors. In addition, the ever-widening gap between the classical language of the Koran and the everyday vernacular corrupted by Syriac, Persian and other tongues and dialects was partly responsible for evoking such linguistic interest.

It was by no mere chance, therefore, that the legendary founder of Arabic grammar, abu-al-Aswad al-Du'ali (f 688), should have flourished in al-Basrah. According to the famous biographer ibn-Khallikan<sup>37</sup> it was "'Ali who laid down for al-Du'ali this principle: The parts of speech are three—noun, verb and particle, and told him to found a complete treatise thereon". This he successfully did. Arabic grammar, however, shows slow and long development and bears striking marks of the influence of Greek logic. Al-Du'ali was followed by al-Khalil ibn-Ahmad, another Basrite scholar, who died about 786. To al-Khalil, who was the first to compile an Arabic dictionary, the Kitab al- Ayn, biographers attribute the discovery of Arabic prosody and its rules, which still hold sway today. His pupil the Persian Sibawayh (f ca. 793) composed the first systematic textbook on Arabic grammar, known by the honorific title al-Kitab (the book), which has ever since been the basis of all native studies of the subject.

Religious tradition and canon law

The study of the Koran and the necessity of expounding it gave rise to the twin sciences of philology and lexicography as well as to that most characteristically Moslem literary activity —the science of tradition {hadith, literally “narrative”). In its technical sense a tradition is an act or saying attributed to the Prophet or to one of his Companions. The Koran and tradition provided the foundation upon which theology and fiqh (law), the obverse and reverse of sacred law, were raised. Law in Islam is more intimately related to religion than to jurisprudence as modern lawyers understand it. Roman law, directly or through the Talmud and other media, did undoubtedly affect Umayyad legislation, but to what extent has not been fully ascertained. In fact, of this period, from which hardly any literature has come down to us, we know only a few of the traditionists and jurists, the most renowned of whom were al-Hasan al-Basri and ibn-Shihab al-Zuhri (f 742). The latter, who traced his descent to the Prophet’s tribe, was always so deeply absorbed in his studies to the neglect of all worldly concerns that his wife once remarked, “By Allah, these books of yours are worse to me than three rival wives possibly could be!”<sup>1</sup> Al-Basri was highly esteemed as a transmitter of tradition, since he was believed to have known personally seventy of those who took part in the battle of Badr. Most of the religious movements within Islam trace their origin back to al-Basri. The Sufis felt throughout the ages the lasting influence of his ascetic piety, the orthodox Sunnis<sup>2</sup> never tire of quoting his devout sayings and even the Mu'tazilites reckon him as one of themselves. No wonder the populace of al-Basrah turned out in a body to follow his funeral on Friday the tenth of October 728, and none was left to attend or conduct the afternoon prayer in

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, p. 223; abu-al-Fida', vol. i, pp. 215-16.

' See below, p. 393, n. 2.

the mosque that day—"an unprecedented happening in the history of Islam".<sup>1</sup>

The contributions of the fickle and unorthodox Kufans, many of whom were Shi'ites or 'Alids, to Arabic philology and Moslem learning were almost, but not quite, as brilliant as those of their neighbours the Basrites. Rivalry between the scholars of the two camps developed two well-recognized schools of Arabic grammar and literature. Among the celebrated Companions, regarded as authorities on Moslem tradition, who settled in al-Kufah during the caliphates of 'Umar and 'Uthman was the redhaired, thin-legged 'Abdullah ibn-Mas'ud (ca. 653), who is said to have been responsible for eight hundred and forty-eight traditions.<sup>2</sup> It was a peculiar feature of ibn-Mas'ud, when giving information about the Prophet, to tremble, exude sweat from his forehead and express himself with deliberate and hesitant caution, lest he transmit something inexact.<sup>3</sup> Equally distinguished among the Kufan traditionists was 'Amir ibn-Sharahll al-Sha'bi (f ca. 728), one of the many South Arabians who gained eminence in the early days of Islam, who is said to have heard traditions from some hundred and fifty Companions<sup>4</sup> which he related from memory without putting down a single line in black and white. Withal, the general judgment of modern critics is quite favourable in regard to his trustworthiness. The most eminent of al-Sha'bi's pupils was the great abu-Hanifah. We have it on the authority of al-Sha'bi that he himself was sent by the Caliph 'Abd-al-Malik on an important mission to the Byzantine emperor in Constantinople.

It was under the 'Abbasids, as we shall see later, that these twin cities of al-'Iraq reached their highest level of intellectual endeavour and achievement. In their later

development the 'Iraq schools of tradition and jurisprudence were not swayed by the old conservative traditions as were the schools of al-Hijaz.

Arabic historiography, which also began at this time, started History in the form of tradition (hadith). It was therefore one of the <sup>writing</sup> earliest disciplines cultivated by the Arab Moslems. The desire of the early caliphs to scan the proceedings of kings and rulers

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 228.

\* Al-Nawawi, Tahdhib al-Asma , ed. F. Wiistenfeld (Gottingen, 1842-7), p. 370.

' Ibn-Sa'd, vol. iii, pt. i, pp. 110-11.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Sam'ani, al-Ansab, ed. Margoliouth (Leyden, 1912), fol. 334 recto; cf. ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 436.

before their time, the interest of the believers in collecting the old stories about the Prophet and his Companions—which stories became the bases of later books on biography (strati) and conquests (maghazt)—the necessity of ascertaining the genealogical relationship of each Moslem Arabian in order to determine the amount of stipend he received from the public treasury, the elucidation of passages in Arabic poetry and the identification of persons and places cited in religious works, the anxiety of the subject peoples to record the past achievements of their races as a counterpoise to Arab chauvinism—all these provided the stimulus for historical research. Among the early distinguished story-tellers was the semi-legendary South Arabian\* Abid (\*Ubayd) ibn-Sharyah, who on the invitation of Mu'awiyah went to Damascus to inform the caliph about “the early kings of the Arabians and their

races''.<sup>1</sup> \*Abid composed for his royal patron a number of works on his specialty, one of which, the *Kitab al-Mulūk wa-Akhabâr al-Mâdin* (the book of kings and the history of the ancients), was in wide circulation at the time of the historian al-Mas'udi<sup>2</sup> (f 956). Another of those versed in the "science of origins" (ʿilm al-azwâj) was Wahb ibn-Munabbih (fin San'â', ca. a Yamanite Jew of Persian origin who probably professed Islam and one of whose works has recently been published.<sup>3</sup> Wahb, whose trustworthiness is open to grave question, became one of the chief sources of information, or rather misinformation, about pre-Islamic South Arabia and foreign lands.<sup>4</sup> Still another was Ka'b al-Ahbar (Ka'b of the rabbis, t 652 or 654 in Hirs), also a Yamanite Jew, who accepted Islam under one of the first two caliphs and acted as teacher and counsellor to the court of Mu'awiyah when the latter was still governor of Syria.<sup>5</sup> Thus did Ka\*b become the earliest authority for the Jewish-Moslem traditions. Through Ka\*b, ibn-Munabbih and other Jewish converts a number of talmudic stories ultimately found their way into Moslem tradition and were incorporated with Arabic historical lore.

<sup>1</sup> Al-Nadim, *al-Fihrist*, ed. G. Flügel (Leipzig, 1872), p. 89, 1. 26; cf. ibn-Khalikân, vol. ii, p. 365.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. iv, p. 89.

<sup>8</sup> *Al-Tijân fi Mulūk Himyar* (Haydarâbâd, 1347), with a supplement (pp. 311489) entitled "Akhabâr 'Abid", by 'Abid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Khallikân, vol. iii, pp. 106-7; *Tâbâr* vol. iii, pp. 2493-4; Nawawî, p. 619.

<sup>6</sup> Consult Nawawî, p. 523; ibn-Sa'd, vol. vii, pt. 2, p. 156; ibn-Qutaybah, *Maarif*, p. 219.

In the Umayyad period we can also detect the rudiments of many of those religio-philosophical movements which were later to shake Islam to its very foundation. In the first half of the eighth century there flourished in al-Basrah a certain Wasil ibn-\*Ata\* (f 748), the founder of the famous school of rationalism termed Mu'tazilah. The Mu'tazilites (seceders, schismatics) were so called because of their major doctrine that he who commits a mortal sin (kabvrah^ secedes from the ranks of the believers but does not become an unbeliever; he occupies a medial position between the two.<sup>1</sup> Wasil was a pupil of al-Hasan al-Basri, who inclined for a time to the doctrine of free will, which doctrine became another cardinal point in Mu'tazilite belief. This doctrine of free will was at the time held by a group called Qadarites (from qadar = power) as opposed to the Jabrites (from jabr = compulsion).<sup>2</sup> The Qadarites represent a reaction against the harsh predestinarianism of Islam, a corollary of God's almightiness so strongly emphasized in the Koran,<sup>3</sup> and betray Christian Greek influence. The Qadarites were the earliest school of philosophy in Islam, and how widely spread their ideas were may be inferred from the fact that two of the Umayyad caliphs, Mu'awiyah II and Yazid III, were Qadarites.<sup>4</sup>

To the cardinal doctrine of free will the Mu'tazilites added another: the denial of the coexistence with God of the divine attributes, such as power, wisdom and life, on the ground that such conceptions would destroy the unity of God. Hence the Mu'tazilites' favourite appellation for themselves: "the partisans of justice and unity". This rationalistic movement attained significant importance under the 'Abbasids, especially al-Ma'mun (813-33), as we shall see later. Intellectually, Baghdad began where al-Basrah and al-Kufah ended.

One of the principal agents through whom Christian lore and St. John Greek thought at this time found their way into Islam was St. Damascus John of Damascus (Joannes Damascenus), surnamed Chrysor-rhoas (golden-tongued), as his earlier Antiochene namesake was surnamed Chrysostom. Although he wrote in Greek, John was

<sup>1</sup> Mas'udi, vol. vi, p. 22, vii, p. 234. Cf. Shahrastani, p. 33; al-Baghdadi, Uṣul

al-Din (Istanbul, 1928), vol. i, p. y<sup>^</sup>to-yMukhtafaral-Farqbayn al-Firaq, ed. Hitti (Cairo, 1924), p. 98; al-Nawbakhti, Firaq al-Shi'ah<sub>t</sub> ed. H. Ritter (Istanbul, 1931), P-5>

<sup>2</sup> Cf. al-Iji, Kttab al-Mawaqif, ed. Th. Soerensen (Leipzig, 1848), pp. 334, 362.

<sup>3</sup> Stirs. 3 : 25-26, 15 : 21, 42 : 26, 43 : 10, 54 : 49, etc.; cf. ibn-Hazm, vol. iii, p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-al-'Ibri, p. 190; Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 402.

246 THE Umayyad and 'Abbasid Empires Part III not a Greek but a Syrian who spoke Aramaic at home and knew, in addition to both of these languages, Arabic. His grandfather Mansur ibn-Sarjun was the financial administrator of Damascus at the time of its Arab conquest and connived with its bishop in surrendering the town. He kept his position under the Moslems and John's father succeeded to the office. As a young man John attended drinking bouts of al-Akhtal and Muawiyah's son Yazid and succeeded his father in that most important office in the Arab government. In his early thirties he gave it all up in favour of a life of asceticism and devotion in the monastery of St. Saba near Jerusalem. Here he died about

748. Among St. John's works is a dialogue with a "Saracen" on the divinity of Christ and the freedom of human will which is intended to be an apology for Christianity, a manual for the guidance of Christians in their arguments with the Moslems. John himself probably held many such debates in the presence of the caliph. His influence is not hard to detect in the formation of the Qadarite school. To St. John tradition ascribes the story of the ascetic Barlaam and the Hindu prince Josaphat, perhaps the most famous religious romance of the Middle Ages. Modern critics recognize the story as a Christian version of an episode in the life of the Buddha, who under the name Josaphat (or Ioasaph) was, strange as it may seem, canonized by both the Latin and the Greek Churches. Thus did the Buddha twice become a Christian saint. The medieval story of Barlaam and Josaphat goes back through Latin, Greek and Georgian into Arabic, itself evidently a translation from Pahlawi done after St. John's days.<sup>1</sup> Mention is made in the Fihrist<sup>2</sup> of a Kitab al-Budd (the book of Buddha) and of a Kitab Budasaf. John Damascene is considered the greatest and last theologian of the Oriental Greek Church. In ecclesiastical literature the hymns he composed (some of which are still used in Protestant hymnals) mark the highest attainment of beauty by Christian Church poets. As hymnologist, theologian, orator, polemic writer, father of Byzantine music and codifier of Byzantine art he stands out as an ornament to the body of the Church under the caliphate.

Kharijites The Qadarite was the earliest philosophical school of thought in Islam, but the Kharijites formed the earliest religio-political

<sup>1</sup> Paulus Peetrus in *Annalecta Bollandiana*, vol. xlix (Brussels, 1931), pp. 276-312. 2 P.  
305.



[1](#)

Ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, p. 190, ll. 18-19.     [2](#) Theophanes, pp. 332, 345-6.

[2](#)

• Vol. i, p. 2868.  
cf. p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> Tabari, vol. ii, p. 86;

[3](#)

\* Vol. xvi, p. 33.  
Hitti, p. 19.

• Baladhuri, p. 5 =

[4](#)

Vol. ii, p. 1275.

[5](#)

<sup>1</sup> H. A. R. Gibb in Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, London Institution, vol. ii (1921), pp. 467-74

[6](#)

<sup>1</sup> The native rulers of Samarqand, Khwarizm and Shash were perhaps related by marriage to the khan, or khaqan, of the Western Turks, though they appear in Arab histories with such Persian titles as khudah, shah and dihqan. The ruler of Sogdiana residing at Samarqand, also bore the Persian title ikhshld, as did the king of Far ghanah. See ibn-Khurdadhbih, pp. 39-40; Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 479. The Arabs applied the term "Turk" to any non-Persian people north-east of the Oxus

[7](#)

- Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 346.

[8](#)

For other traditions extolling Damascus see ibn-'A?5kir, vol. i, pp. 46 seq.

[9](#)

' Al-Jabal al-Shaykh, the greyheaded mountain.

[10](#)

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-Jubayr, p. 269, 1. 3; "al-Qubbah al-Khadra", the green dome, in Aghani

[11](#)

vol. vi, p. 159.  
80.

[11](#) Aghani, vol. iv, p.

[12](#)

<sup>s</sup> 30,000 according to al-Maqqari, Nafh al~Tib min Ghuyn al-Andalus al-Ratib ed. Dozy, Wright et al. (Leyden, 1855), vol. i, p. 144; cf. ibn-al-Athir, vol. iv, p. 448

[13](#)

Cf. Ps. 145 : 13; Heb. 1:8.  
4,45 seq.

[14](#) Ibn-al-Jawzi, pp. 173-

[14](#)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. pp. 99-100. Kitâb al-\*Uyûn iv-al-Hadâ iq fî Akhbâr al-Haqâ iq<sub>t</sub> ed. de

[15](#)

Goeje (Leyden, 1865), p. 4.

[16](#)

Fakhri, p. 176.

[17](#)

<sup>6</sup> Mas'üdi, vol. v, p. 479; ci. Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 393<sup>1</sup> ibn-Qutaybah, Ma dr if,

[18](#)

p. 185; abu-al-Fida', vol. i, p. 216; Kitâb al-'Uyün, p. 69.

[19](#)

Mas'udi, vol. v, p. 239.

[20](#)

Tabari, vol. ii, p. 1944; ibn-Khaldun, vol. iii, p. 165, l. 16 (cf. p. 195, ll. 25-7); ibn-al-Athir, vol. v, p. 267, ll. 7-8.

[21](#)

Mas'udi, vol. v, p. 195.

[22](#)

Ibn-al-Athir, vol. v, p. 220; Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 401.

[23](#)

<sup>6</sup> Fakhri, p. 197; abu-al-Fida', vol. i, p. 222. See below, p. 285.

[24](#)

Aghdni, vol. xv, p. 48, 1. 12.

[25](#)

<sup>1</sup> vol. iii, p. 403; Nuwayri, Nihayah, vol. iv, p. 91.

[26](#)

' Mas'udi, vol. v, p. 157.

[27](#)

Most of our information about the lighter side of the caliphs' lives comes from

[28](#)

Agham, primarily a literary work, and similar books, which should not be taken too literally. Aghdni, vol. i, p. 3, gives this criterion for the choice of data: "elegance that pleases the onlooker and entertains the hearer".

[29](#)

Kitab al-' Uyun (1865), pp. 40-41; cf. Aghdni, vol. xiii, p. 165.

[30](#)

- Al-Nawaji, Halbat al-Kumayt (Cairo, 1299), P\* 98.

[31](#)

' Sur. 14: 18. [31](#) Agham, vol. vi, p. 125.

[32](#)

Al-Ya'qubi, Kitab al-Bui dan, ed. de Goeje (Leyden, 1892), p. 339.

[33](#)

Gf. Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 277; T. W. Arnold, The Preaching of Islam, 2nd ed. (London, 1913), p. 81.

[34](#)

Eng. Bassora. Present-day al-Basrah lies six miles to the north-east of the ancient city.

[35](#)

Al-Kufah may have been built one or two years after al-Baṣrah; Yaqut, vol. iv, PP- 3<sup>22</sup>'3

[36](#)

Isfakhri, p. 80; ibn-Hawqal, p. 159.

[37](#)

Vol. i, pp. 429-30 = de Slane, vol. i, p. 663.

sect. These deadly opponents of 'Ali, once his supporters, repeatedly arose in armed opposition to the prerogative conferred on the Quraysh that the caliph should be one of their number.<sup>1</sup> In endeavouring to maintain the primitive, democratic principles of Islam the puritanical Kharijites caused rivers of blood to flow in the first three Moslem centuries. In course of time they forbade the cult of saints with the attendant local pilgrimages and prohibited Sufi fraternities. Today they survive in the form of a subdivision called Ibadite (commonly Abadite), after ibn-Ibad<sup>2</sup> (second half of first Moslem century), the most tolerant of the Kharijite founders of sub-sects, and are scattered in Algeria, Tripolitania and \*Uman, whence they later crossed to Zanzibar.

Another sect, but of minor importance, which arose in the Murji'ites Umayyad age was the Murji'ite, whose fundamental article of faith consisted in the suspension (irja} of judgment against believers who commit sins and in not declaring them infidels.<sup>3</sup> More specifically, the Murji'ites refused to see in the suppression of religious law by the Umayyad caliphs a justifiable cause for denying that house the homage due them as the de facto political leaders of Islam. To the followers of this doctrine the fact that the Umayyads were nominally Moslems sufficed. 'Uthman and \*Ali as well as Mu'awiyah were all servants of God, and by God alone must they be judged. In general, Murji'ite influence was on the side of tolerance. The most illustrious representative of the moderate wing of this school was the great divine abu-Hanifah (f 767), who founded the first of the four orthodox schools of jurisprudence in Islam.

The Shi'ah, one of the two hostile camps into which early The Islam split on the issue of the caliphate, took definite form during <sup>Shi'ah</sup> the Umayyad period. The imamship then

became, and has since continued to be, the differentiating element between Sunnites (orthodox) and Shi'ites. The persistence with which the Shi'ah clings to its basic belief in \*Ali and 'Ali's sons as the true imams, not unlike the persistence of the Roman Catholic Church in the dogma of its relation to Peter and his successors, has ever remained its distinguishing feature. The founder of Islam made a revelation, the Koran, the intermediary between God and man;

the Shi'ah made the intermediary a person, the imam.<sup>1</sup> To "I believe in Allah the one God" and "I believe in the revelation of the Koran, which is uncreated from eternity", the Shi'ites now added a new article of faith: "I believe that the imam especially chosen by Allah as the bearer of a part of the divine being is the leader to salvation".

The institution of the imamate was a product of theocratic opposition to the profane conception of might. According to its theory, as opposed to the Sunnite view,<sup>2</sup> the imam is the sole legitimate head of the Moslem community, divinely designated for the supreme office. He is a lineal descendant of Muhammad through Fatimah and 'Ali. He is a spiritual and religious leader as well as a secular one, endowed with a mysterious power transmitted to him from his predecessor.<sup>8</sup> As such he stands far superior to any other human being and enjoys impeccability (ʿismaK).<sup>\*</sup> Extremists among the Shi'ah went so far as to consider the imam, on account of this divine and luminous essence, the incarnation of God himself.<sup>5</sup> To them \*Ali and his descendent imams constitute a continuous divine revelation in human form. A later ultra-Shi'ite sect even held that Gabriel mistook Muhammad for 'Ali,<sup>6</sup> who was originally intended for the reception of the revelation. In all this the Shi'ite stands in opposition to the Sunnite creed.

How much Shi'ah in its birth and evolution owed to Persian notions and how much to Judaeo-Christian ideas is hard to ascertain. The Mahdi hypothesis which developed later and involved the expectation of a saviour-leader who will usher in a new era of liberty and prosperity was undoubtedly a reflex of Messianic and allied ideas. The enigmatic 'Abdullah ibn-Saba', who was converted to Islam during the caliphate of 'Uthman and embarrassed 'Ali with his excessive veneration, thus be-

<sup>1</sup> From an Arabic stem meaning to precede, to lead. The term, which occurs in the Koran (2:118, 15 : 79, 25:74, 36:11) in no technical sense, is ordinarily applied to the person who in the canonical services indicates the ritual movements. Originally the Prophet, and after him the caliphs or their delegates, filled this office. Ibn-Khaldun, *Muqaddamah*, pp. 159-60.

<sup>2</sup> For this view consult Iji, pp. 296 seq.

<sup>3</sup> Shahrastani, pp. 108-9; Mas'udi, vol. i, p. 70.

<sup>4</sup> Immunity from error and sin is ascribed in varying degrees by Sunnites to the prophets only, especially to Muhammad. Ibn-Hazm, vol. iv, pp. 2-25; I. Goldziher in *Der Islam*, vol. iii (1912), pp. 238-45; Iji, pp. 218 seq.

<sup>5</sup> See below, pp. 440 seq.

- Baghdadi, ed. Hitti, p. 157; ibn-al-Jawzi, *Naqd*, pp. 103-4.

CH. xxi ASPECTS OF LIFE UNDER THE Umayyads coming the founder of extreme Shi'ism,<sup>1</sup> was a Yamanite Jew. Gnosticism also undoubtedly contributed its share to the development of the imamate conception. Of all the lands of Islam, al-\*Iraq proved the most fertile soil for the germination of



'Alid doctrines, and to the present day Persia with its fifteen millions is the bulwark of the Shi'ah.<sup>2</sup> Within the Shi'ite community itself an almost unlimited number of minor sects arose. Different members of "the house of the Prophet" (ahl al-bayt, i.e. 'Ali and his descendants) became the natural centre of attraction for all sorts of non-conformists and malcontents, economic, social, political and religious. Many of the heterodoxies which arose in the first century of Islam and were in themselves a veiled protest against the victorious religion of the Arabians, gradually gravitated to the bosom of Shi'ah as the representative of opposition to the established order. The Isma'ilites, the Qarmatians, the Druzes, the Nusayris and the like, with whom we shall deal later, were all offshoots from the Shi'ite sect.

Public speaking in its several forms was cultivated during Oratory the Umayyad epoch as never before and attained a height unsurpassed in later times. The khatib used it as an instrument of religion in his Friday noon sermons, the general resorted to it as a means of arousing military enthusiasm among his troops and the provincial governor depended upon it for instilling patriotic feeling in his subjects. In an age with no special facilities for propaganda, oratory provided an excellent channel for spreading ideas and kindling emotions. The highly ethical orations of 'Ali, with their rhymes and wise sayings, the sermonettes of the ascetic al-Hasan al-Basri (J 728) delivered in the presence of the Caliph 'Umar ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz and preserved by the latter's biographer,<sup>3</sup> the military and patriotic speeches of Ziyad ibn-Abih and the fiery al-Hajjaj—all these are among the most valuable literary treasures handed down to us from that early age.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ijb P. 343

<sup>2</sup> In all there are today some 50,000,000 Shi'ites, of whom about eighteen millions live in Iran, seven in India, three in al-'Iraq, four in al-Yaman, where they are known by the name of Zaydis, 350,000 in Lebanon and Syria, where they go by the name of Matawilah (i.e. partisans [of \*Ali]). Ultra-Shi'ite sects, including the Isma'ilites, Druzes. Nuṣayris, Yazidis and 'Ali-Ilahis, swell the total to approximately 60,000,000, about 14 per cent, of the whole Moslem body. Cf. above, p. 3; below P-449-

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-al-Jawzi, Sir ah, pp. 121-6.

\* Consult ibn-Qutaybah, ' Uyun al-Akhbar<sub>t</sub> vol. ii, pp. 231-52; al-Jatii?, al-Baydn<sub>t</sub> vol. i (Cairo, 1926), pp. 177 seq., vol. ii, pp. 47 seq.\ 'lqd, vol. ii, pp. 172 seq.

## Correspondence

### Poetry

Political correspondence under the orthodox caliphs was so brief and to the point that we hardly have an official note more than a few lines in length.<sup>1</sup> To 'Abd-al-Hamld al-Katib (i.e. the scribe, f 750), • secretary of the last Umayyad caliphs, is ascribed by ibn-Khallikan <sup>2</sup> the introduction of the flowery, long-drawn-out style with its conventional, polite phraseology betraying Persian influence. This affected style became a model for future generations of writers. A favourite Arabic saying had it that "the art of epistolary composition [ins ha] began with 'Abd-al-Hamid and ended with ibn-al-'Amid".<sup>3</sup> Persian literary influence can also be detected in the many wise sayings and proverbs attributed to 'Ali, to his lieutenant al-Ahnaf (the bandylegged)<sup>4</sup> ibn-Qays (f after

687) and even to Aktham ibn-Sayfi of pre-Islamic reputation, one of whose titles was “the sage [hakim] of the Arabians”.<sup>5</sup>

The greatest intellectual measure of progress achieved under the Umayyads, however, was undoubtedly in the field of poetical composition. That the birth of Islam was not favourable to the chief of the Muses is evinced by the fact that the glorious period of conquest and expansion inspired no poet in a “nation of poets”. With the accession of the worldly Umayyads the old connections with the goddesses of wine, song and poetry were re-established. For the first time the poet of love makes his full appearance in Arabic. While many pre-Islamic bards did preface their long pieces {qasldahs} with a few verses of erotic character, yet none of them could be said to have specialized in love poetry {ghazal}. From this amatory prelude (nasib) of the early qasldahs Arabic lyric poetry arose under the influence of Persian singers and after their example.

The peninsular school has 'Umar ibn-abi-Rabl'ah<sup>6</sup> (f ca. 719) as its chief exponent. This prince of erotic poetry, “the Ovid of Arabia”, was an impious Qurayshite of independent means,<sup>7</sup> who made it his business to make love to the beautiful damsels

<sup>1</sup> For specimens consult Qalqashandi, Subh, vol. vi, pp. 388-91.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. i, p. 550; cf. Mas'udi, vol. vi, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> A vizir of Rukn-al-Dawlah the Buwayhid.

<sup>4</sup> Jahiz, Bayan, vol. i, p. 58. See ibn-Qutaybah, Ma'arif, p. 216; Tabari, vol. ii,

<sup>5</sup> Ibn-Qutaybah, Maarif, p. 153; cf. Aghani, vol. xv, p. 73, 1. 28. See Jahiz,

van, vol. ii, p. 63. <sup>8</sup> His Diwan, ed. Paul Schwarz, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1901-9).

\* Aghani, vol. i, p. 32. On his life and works, see Jibra'il Jabbur, 'Umar ibn-abi-Rabi'ah, 2 vols. (Beirut, 1935-9).

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pilgrimage in Makkah and al-Madīnah as well as to such charming residents as the famous Sukaynah.<sup>1</sup> In language of intense passion and exquisite felicity he immortalized his feeling towards the fair sex. The freshness and chivalry of his verse stand in marked contrast to the primitive passion of Imru'-al-Qays on the one hand and to the stereotyped sentiment of a later age on the other.<sup>2</sup>

If Umar represented free love in poetry, his contemporary Jamil (f 701) of the banu-<sup>c</sup>Udhrah, a Christian tribe of Yamanite origin settled in al-Hijāz, stood for pure and innocent love of the platonic type. Jamil's verses, all addressed to his sweetheart Buthaynah, who belonged to the same tribe,<sup>3</sup> breathe a spirit of tenderness unparalleled in that age. Because of their esthetic value and simple unaffected language they have since been set to music by many Arabic singers. Like Jamil al-<sup>c</sup>Udhri, the semi-mythical Majnūn Layla,<sup>4</sup> whose original name is said to have been Qays ibn-al-Mulawwah,<sup>5</sup> represents the lyric type of poetical composition. Qays, according to legend, became infatuated to the point of madness (whence his surname majnūn) with a woman of the same tribe named Layla, who reciprocated his love but was obliged to marry another to satisfy her father. Crazy with despair, Qays passes the rest of his life wandering half-naked among the hills and valleys

of his native Najd singing the beauty of his beloved and yearning for a sight of her. Only when her name was mentioned would he return to his normal self.<sup>6</sup> Thus did Majnūn Layla become the hero of numberless Arabic, Persian and Turkish romances extolling the power of undying love. Undoubtedly many of the poems attached to the names of Jamil and Majnūn were not actually composed by them but were originally ballads and folk-songs.

Besides love poetry, political poetry made its appearance under Umayyad auspices. The first occasion was the request made of Miskin al-Darimi to compose and sing publicly verses commemorating the nomination of Yazid to the caliphate.<sup>7</sup> To this

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Qutaybah, *Shi'r*, p. 349.

<sup>2</sup> See W. G. Palgrave, *Essays on Eastern Questions* (London, 1872), p. 279.

<sup>3</sup> Consult Ibn-Qutaybah, *Shi'r*, pp. 260-68; Aghâni, vol. vii, pp. 77-110.

<sup>4</sup> Aghâni, vol. i, p. 169, quoted by Ibn-Khallikân, vol. i, p. 148.

<sup>8</sup> Al-Kutubi, *Fawât al-Wafayât* (Bûlâq, 1283), vol. ii, p. 172, makes the date of his death about a.h. 80 = 699.

• Ibn-Qutaybah, *Shi'r*, pp. 358-62.

<sup>7</sup> Aghâni, vol. xviii, pp. 71-2; cf. Ibn-Qutaybah, *Shi'r*, p. 347.

period also belongs the first attempt to compile ancient pre-Islamic poetry, which attempt was undertaken by Hammad al-Rawiyah (i.e. the transmitter, ca. 713-72).<sup>1</sup> Hammad

was born in al-Kufah of a Daylami (Persian) prisoner of war<sup>2</sup> and spoke Arabic with an accent, but he was one of those famed in Arabic annals for possessing phenomenal memories. In answer to a question by al-Walid II he offered to recite of the jahiliyah poems alone, rhyming in each of the letters of the alphabet, at least one hundred different odes for each letter. After listening in person and by proxy to 2900 qasidahs, as we are told, al-Walid felt satisfied and ordered 100,000 dirhams for the reciter.<sup>3</sup> Hammad's great merit, no doubt, was his collection of the famous Golden Odes, otherwise called Mu'allaqat.

The provincial school of poetry in the Umayyad period was headed by al-Farazdaq (ca. 640-728' and Jarir (f ca. 729), that of the capital by al-Akhtal (ca. bys-ca. 710). All three were born and brought up in al-Traq. They were satirists as well as panegyrists. As poets the trio stand in the very front rank among those with whom Arab criticism has found nothing to compare since their time. Al-Akhtal, the Christian, was the champion of the Umayyad cause against the theocratic party;<sup>4</sup> al-Farazdaq, the dissolute, was the poet laureate of 'Abd-al-Malik and his sons al-Walid, Sulayman<sup>5</sup> and Yazid; Jarir, the greatest satirist of the age, was the court poet of al-Hajjaj.<sup>6</sup> In their panegyrics, on which they lived rather than on their lampoons, these poets performed the same function as the party press today. Al-Farazdaq<sup>7</sup> and Jarir often attacked each other in the most virulent and abusive language, and al-Akhtal as a rule sided with the former. How lightly Christianity sat on the heart of the profane, wine-bibbing Akhtal is illustrated by the words of consolation he addressed to his pregnant wife as she rushed to touch

<sup>1</sup> Fihrist, p. 91; ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 294.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-Qutaybah, Ma'arif, p. 268.

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, 'p. 292; Aghani, vol. v, pp. 164-5. See 'Iqd, vol. iii, pp. 137-8.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Qutaybah, Shi'r, pp. 301-4.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. pp. 297-8. For Farazdaq's eulogies of his patron caliphs see his Diwan, ed. R. Boucher (Paris, 1875), passim.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn-Qutaybah, p. 287. For samples of his encomiums see his Diwan (Cairo, 1313), vol. i.

<sup>7</sup> On him see Aghani, vol. viii, pp. 186-97, vol- xix, PP- 2-52; ibn-Khallikan, vol. iii, pp. 136-46 = de Slane, vol. iii, pp. 612-28; Joseph Hell, Das Leben des Farazdak (Leipzig, 1903).

the garment of a passing bishop and succeeded only in reaching the tail of the donkey he was riding: "He and the tail of his ass— there is no difference!" <sup>1</sup>

Education of the formal type was not common in those days. Education To the early Umayyad princes the badiyah, Syrian desert, acted as a sort of school to which they sent their young sons to acquire the pure Arabic tongue and become well versed in poetry. It was thither that Mu\*awiyah sent his son and future successor YazTd. The public considered him educated who could read and write his native language, use the bow and arrow and swim. Such a person was styled al-kamil, the perfect one.<sup>2</sup> The value of swimming was enhanced by life on the Mediterranean coast The ethical ideals of education as gleaned from the literature bearing on the subject were courage, endurance in time of trouble (sabd), observance of the rights and obligations of neighbourliness (jiwar), manliness {muru'ali}, generosity

and hospitality, regard for women and fulfilment of solemn promises. Many of these will be recognized as the virtues highly prized in Bedouin life.

After the time of \*Abd-al-Malik the tutor or preceptor {mu ad dib\ usually a client or a Christian, became a standing figure in the court. The tutor of this caliph's sons received the following injunction from their father: "Teach them to swim and accustom them to little sleep".<sup>3</sup> 'Umar II took his children so severely to task for violating the rules of Arabic grammar that he was inclined to use corporal punishment.<sup>4</sup> Significant are the instructions he communicated officially to their tutor: "Let the first moral lesson impressed upon them be hatred of means of amusement, whose initiative is from the devil and whose consequence is the wrath of God".<sup>6</sup>

The public desiring to secure an education, as education went in those days, patronized the mosques where classes centring on the Koran and hadith were given. The earliest teachers in Islam were therefore the Koran readers {qurra'). As early as the year 17 (638) the Caliph 'Umar sent such teachers in all <sup>1</sup> Aghdni, vol. vii, p. 183, where the anecdote is reported to illustrate his devotion to religion.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-Sa'd, vol. iii, pt. 2, p. 91, 11. 10-11, cf. vol. v, p. 309, 11. 7 seq.', Aghdni, vol. vi, p. 165, 1. 9.

' Mubarrad, p. 77, 11. 6-7.

<sup>4</sup> Yaqut, Mu jam al-Udaba', ed. Margoliouth, vol. i (Leyden, 1907), pp. 25-6.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-al-Jawzi, Sirah, pp. 257-8. Consult Jahi?, Bayan, vol. ii, pp. 138-43.



directions and ordered the people to meet with them on Fridays in the mosques. 'Umar II sent as chief judge to Egypt Yazid ibn-abi-Habib (f 746), who is said to have been the first to distinguish himself as teacher there.<sup>4</sup> In al-Kūfah we read of a certain al-Dahhāk ibn-Muzāhim<sup>5</sup> (f 723), who kept an elementary school (kuttāb') and made no charges for instruction.<sup>6</sup> In the second Moslem century we even hear of a Bedouin settling in al-Basrah and conducting a school where fees were charged.<sup>7 8</sup> "Science," the Arabs say, ascribing the words to the Prophet, "is twofold: that which relates to religion and that which relates to the body [i.e. medicine]."

The peninsular medicine was very primitive indeed. Legitimate remedies mingled with magical practices and talismans against the evil eye. A few prescriptions limiting treatment to the use of honey, cupping and bleeding embedded in traditions termed "the Prophet's medicine" have been preserved and handed down to posterity. The critical ibn-Khaldūn in 'his famous Muqad-damah\* speaks slightly of this type of medicine, declaring that the Prophet was sent to teach religious laws and principles rather than medication.

Scientific Arab medicine springs from sources mainly Greek and partly Persian. Persian medicine itself was influenced by Greek tradition. The list of Arabian physicians in the first century of Islam is headed by al-Hārith ibn-Kaladah (f ca. 634) of al-Tā'if, who studied in Persia.<sup>9</sup> Al-Hārith was the first scientifically trained man in the peninsula and won the honorary title of "the doctor of the Arabians".<sup>10</sup> In the art of healing he was succeeded, as was customary, by his son al-Nadr, whose mother was the Prophet's maternal aunt.<sup>8</sup>

By the time of the Arab conquest of Western Asia, Greek science was no more a living force. It was rather a tradition in the hands of Greek- or Syriac-writing commentators and practitioners. The court doctors of the Umayyads belonged to this group. Outstanding among them were ibn-Uthāl, the Christian

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physician of Mu'awiyah,<sup>11</sup> and Tayâdhûq, the evidently Greek physician of al-Hajjâj.<sup>12</sup> Some of Tayâdhûq's aphorisms have been preserved, but none of the three or four books ascribed to him. A Jewish physician of Persian origin, Mâsarjawayh of al-Basrah, who flourished in the first days of Marwân ibn-al-Hakam, translated (683) into Arabic a Syriac treatise on medicine originally composed in Greek by a Christian priest in Alexandria, Ahrûn by name,<sup>13</sup> and was thus responsible for the earliest scientific book in the language of Islam. The Caliph al-Walid is credited with having segregated persons afflicted with leprosy and with having made special provision for their treatment.<sup>14</sup> Umar II is said to have transferred the schools of medicine from Alexandria, where the Greek tradition flourished, to Antioch and Harran.<sup>15 16</sup> ,

Alchemy, like medicine, one of the few sciences in which the Achemv Arabs later made a distinct contribution, was one of the disciplines early developed. Khalid (f 704 or 708), the son of the second Umayyad caliph and the " philosopher [hakim] of the Mar-wânids", was according to the Fihrist\* (our oldest and best source of information) the first in Islam to have translations made from Greek and Coptic books on alchemy, medicine and astrology. Though proved legendary,<sup>17</sup> the ascription of this activity to Khalid is significant, since it points out the truth that thé Arabs drew their scientific knowledge from the older Greek sources and

received their first impulse therefrom. With the name of this Umayyad prince legend associates the name of the famous Jâbir ibn-Hayyân (Latinized Geber); but Jabir flourished later, about 776, and will be dealt with under the 'Abbasids. Likewise the astrological and alchemical treatises ascribed to Ja'far al-Sâdiq (700-765),<sup>18</sup> a descendant of 'Ali and one of the twelve imams of the Shfah, have been discredited by critical modern scholarship.<sup>19</sup> The most unfortunate fact about the intellectual life under the Umayyads is that it left no extant traces in the form of documents from which we can properly evaluate it.

### Architec cure

If there ever was an indigenous Arabian architecture it could have existed only in al-Yaman, concerning which our present state of investigation and exploration is as yet unable to afford sufficient data. Even then South Arabian art could not have played much of a part in the northern life of the peninsula. Here the tent was the ordinary dwelling, the open air the temple and the desert sands the tomb. The inhabitant of the rare oasis had, as he still has today, a rude architecture represented by buildings of sun-dried brick covered with flat roofs of palm wood and clay, devoid of decoration and ornament and suited only to the simplest needs. Even the Hijaz national shrine, al-Ka'bah, was nothing but a primitive cube-like structure with no roof. As the structure stood at the time of Muhammad it was the work of a Coptic Christian carpenter who used wood salvaged from the wreck of some Byzantine ships cast ashore at Juddah. The rockcut tombs of Mada'in Salih (ancient al-Hijr), the picturesque chambers carved in the multi-coloured sand cliffs of Petra, the colonnaded and arched palaces and sanctuaries of Palmyra, such churches as the magnificent one rebuilt by the Ghassanid phylarch al-Mundhir ibn-al-Harith on the grave of the martyred St.

Sergius at al-Rusafah—all these indeed reveal a high order of artistic technique, but it is a technique borrowed from Hellenized Egypt and Syria and is not characteristically Arabian.

Architecture, as the first and most permanent of the arts, has in its religious variety always been the principal representative of the building art. The place of worship, literally the home of the deity, is the first structure on which the newly awakened soul strives to impress a loftier character than that required to satisfy the material needs of a human habitation. In the case of the Moslem Arabs art found its supreme expression in religious architecture. The Moslem architects, or the men they employed, evolved a scheme of building, simple and dignified, based on earlier patterns but singularly expressive of the spirit of the new religion. Thus we have in the mosque (from Ar. masjid, a place to prostrate oneself) an epitome of the history of the development of Islamic civilization in its interracial and international relationships. Perhaps no clearer example could be cited to illustrate

## INTERIOR OF THE DOME OF THE ROCK

### The Mosque of al-Madinah

the cultural interplay between Islam and its neighbours than the mosque.

The simple mosque of Muhammad at al-Madinah rather than the Makkan sanctuary fortuitously became the general prototype of the congregational mosque in the first century of Islam. This mosque consisted of a courtyard open to the sky enclosed by walls of sun-baked clay.<sup>1</sup> As a protection

from the sun the Prophet later extended the flat roof from the adjacent buildings to cover the whole open court. The roof consisted of palm trunks used as columns to support a cover of palm fronds and mud.<sup>2</sup> A palm trunk fixed in the ground served first as a pulpit (minbar)<sup>2</sup> for the Prophet to stand on while addressing the congregation.<sup>4</sup> This was later replaced by a small platform of tamarisk wood with three steps copied from those seen in Christian churches in Syria.

From Ibrahim Rifat, "Mir at al- Haramayit"

## THE MOSQUE OF MAKKAH SEEN FROM THE EAST

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Hisham, pp. 336-7.

\* Baladhuri, p. 6; Bukhari, vol. i, pp. 106-7.

- In Orientalische Studien. Theodor Noldeke, ed. C. Bezold (Giessen, 1906), vol. i, pp. 331 seq., C. H. Becker has shown that the minbar was originally a raised seat or throne used by the ruler and not associated with worship.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Sa'd, vol. i, pt. 2, p. 9; F. Wiistenfeld, Geschichte der Stadt Medina (Gottingen, 1860), p. 63; cf. Bukhari, vol. i, p. 107.

Whether the Prophet found it necessary to erect an indicator {mihrab} of the direction of prayer {(jiblali) in his mosque is not certain. In reciting their prayers the worshippers arranged themselves in ranks parallel to and facing the wall, originally toward Jerusalem and later toward Makkah.<sup>1</sup> From the top of the flat roof the Abyssinian Bilal with his stentorian voice called the believers to prayer.<sup>2</sup> Here, then,

we have in their simplest forms almost all the rudiments of a congregational mosque—a court, some cover to shelter the worshipper and a pulpit.

The subsequent advance of the Arabians fanwise through Western Asia and North Africa brought them into possession

From Ibrahim Rifat, "A/ir at al- fjaramayn

THE INTERIOR OF THE MOSQUE OF AL-MADINAH of numberless standing and ruined structures representing a high artistic development and, what is more essential, it put them in control of the living technical knowledge and skill inherited by members of the conquered races from ages past. This technique, applied to the religious needs of the Moslem community as indicated by the Madinah Mosque and modified by local conditions in different regions, produced in course of time what has been variously designated Saracenic, Arabian, Moslem and Mohammedan<sup>3</sup> art. The structural material, whether stone, brick

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Sa'd, vol. i, pt. 2, pp. 3-5.

\* One or two years after his arrival in al-Madinah the Prophet decided on the adhân as the formal call to prayer after considering the «possibility of using the nàqûs (wooden gong) as in the Christian churches. Ibn-Sa d, vol. i. pt. 2, p. 7

\* Modern Moslems object to the use of this term because of its parallelism to the term "Christian" applied to the worshippers of Christ, while they, as they maintain, are not worshippers of Muhammad.

or clay, was in each case determined by what had prevailed in the particular locality. In Syria Moslem architecture was

influenced by the pre-existent Christian Syro-Byzantine style with its native and Roman antecedents. In Mesopotamia and Persia it was affected by the Nestorian and Sasanid forms based on an earlier native tradition. In Egypt many decorative motifs were supplied by the local Copts. Thus there gradually developed a number of distinct schools of Arab art: (i) Syro-Egyptian, following the Greco-Roman and native precedents; (2) Traquo-Persian, based on Sasanid and ancient Chaldaean and Assyrian styles; (3) Spanish and North African, showing native Christian and Visigothic influence and often called Moorish or Maghribi; and (4) Indian, bearing clear marks of the Hindu style. In China the mosque is almost a replica of the Buddhist temple.

### Eariy mosques in the provinces

The first mosque erected in a conquered land was that of al-Basrah built by 'Utbah ibn-Ghazwan (637 or 638), who also founded the city itself as a winter camp for the army. This place of prayer was at first an open space fenced round with reeds. The edifice was later rebuilt of clay and sun-dried bricks (libnj by abu-Musa al-Ash'ari, 'Umar's governor, who covered the roof with grass.<sup>20</sup> In 638 or 639 the invading general, Sa'd ibn-abi-Waqqas, established the other military camp, al-Kufah, with a simple mosque as its centre. Close by the mosque stood the governor's residence {daral-imaraK). As in al-Basrah, the mosque was originally an open square with walls of reed and later of clay and sun-dried bricks.<sup>21</sup> Ziyad, the viceroy of Mu'awiyah, rebuilt this mosque with a colonnade following the Sasanid model. In other respects the mosque conformed to the type fortuitously formulated by Muhammad in al-Madinah. No trace is left of this structure or of the Basrah mosque. Of the 'Ali mosque in al-Kufah, erected about 656 and visited in 1184 by the famous Andalusian traveller ibn-Jubayr,<sup>22</sup> little is known.

The third important camp in Islam was that of 'Amr ibn-al-\*As in al-Fustat (Old Cairo). Here in 642 'Amr laid out the first Moslem place of prayer in Africa. In its original form 'Amr's mosque, of which there is likewise no trace,<sup>4</sup> was like the others a simple quadrangle with no niche (jnihrab') to indicate the direction of prayer and with no minaret {mi' dhanali). 'Amr equipped it later with a pulpit built and presented by the Christian king of Nubia.<sup>23</sup> The next important mosque was that of 'Uqbah ibn-Nafi<sup>c</sup> in al-Qayrawan (670-75) which, like al-Fustat, was a military camp. 'Uqbah started with the mosque and government house as a centre and grouped the people's dwellings around them.<sup>24</sup> The mosque was rebuilt several times by his successors and finally by the Aghlabid Ziyadat-Allah I (817-38), since whose days it has stood as one of the greatest sanctuaries in Islam.

In those cases where Moslems established themselves in towns already standing, use was made of older structures. In al-Mada'in, Sa'd ibn-abi-Waqqas used the I wan (arched hall) of the Persian emperor as a place of .worship.<sup>25</sup> In Damascus the Cathedral of St. John was rebuilt into a mosque by al-Walid I.<sup>26</sup> But in Hirns the same building is said to have been used in common as a mosque and as a church.<sup>27</sup>

The mihrab, a recess or niche in the wall of the mosque indicating the direction of prayer, was a later addition into the equipment of the mosque taken over from the church. Al-Walid and his governor, 'Umar ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz, are usually credited with its introduction,<sup>28</sup> though some credit Mu'awiyah.<sup>29</sup> The Madinah Mosque was evidently the first to get a mihrab. The mihrab rapidly became a common feature of all mosques and like the Christian altar appropriated for itself the largest measure of sacredness. As such it became



the recipient of the varied forms of decoration lavished on it by the believers and may therefore be considered the standard for determining the quality of the continually changing styles of Islamic decorative art.

A profane innovation in the mosque for which Mu'awiyah<sup>30</sup> is generally blamed is the maqsurah, a fenced-off part in the interior of the mosque reserved for the use of the caliph. Different reasons have been assigned for its introduction, the chief being protection for the person of the caliph after the Kharijite attempt upon his life.<sup>1</sup> The maqsurah was evidently used by the caliphs for retirement and rest or for deliberation.<sup>2</sup>

Like the mihrab, the minaret was introduced by the Umayyads. Syria was therefore the original home of the minaret. Here the minaret took the form of the native watch-tower or of its successor the church tower, which was square.<sup>3</sup>

One of the earliest authorities<sup>4</sup> to mention a minaret on the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus explicitly states that it had been a watch-tower (natur) belonging to the Cathedral of St. John. In Egypt the minaret is said to have been introduced by a governor of Mu'awiyah who provided each of the four corners of the Mosque of 'Amr in al-Fustat with one.<sup>5</sup> In al-'Iraq the Basrah Mosque was provided by Mu'awiyah's governor, Ziyad, with a stone minaret.<sup>6</sup> But it was again the famous Umayyad builder, al-Walid, who was probably responsible for many minarets in Syria and al-Hijaz. Al-Walid's governor, 'Umar, introduced the new feature into the Madinah Mosque.<sup>7</sup> After his time minarets became more and more numerous.

While the square stone minaret of Syria was the oldest in Islam and served as prototype for others, especially in

North Africa and Spain, it was not the only type developed. Moslem minarets followed the traditional shape of the towers of the country in which they arose. In Egypt minarets for many centuries were built only of brick and the famous lighthouse of Alexandria, the Pharos, is said by some to have exercised some architectural influence. In al-'Iraq a ninth-century Moslem tower-minaret at Samarra on the Tigris reflects the ancient Assyrian ziggurat (high place) with its seven stories representing the sun, the moon and the five planets then known.<sup>8</sup>

### The Dome of the Rock

Because of its biblical association and as the first qiblah of Islam<sup>9</sup> and the traditional stopping-place of Muhammad on

<sup>1</sup> Dinawari, p. 229; ibn-Khaldun, Muqaddamah, pp. 224-6; cf. Tabari, vol. i, p. 3465, 11. 8-9.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Aghdni, vol. xvii, p. 116, 1. 6. <sup>3</sup> Maqdisi, p. 182, 11. 8-9.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-al-Faqih, p. 108; cf. ibn-BatJutah, vol. i, p. 203.

<sup>4</sup> Maqrizi, vol. ii, p. 248. • Baladhuri, p. 348.

<sup>1</sup> Wiistenfeld, Stadt, p. 75; ibn-BaJtutah, vol. i, p. 272.

• Morris Jastrow, Jr., The Civilization of Babylonia and Assyria (Philadelphia,

5), PP 376-7. See below, pp. 418-19.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Sa'd, vol. i, pt. 2, p. 3; see Koran 2 : 136, 138.

Front Karl Gröber, "Palästina, Arabien und Syrien" (Atlantis-Verlag, Berlin) THE DOME OF THE ROCK AND THE DOME OF THE CHAIN

his famous nocturnal journey heavenward, Jerusalem very early acquired special sanctity in the eyes of all Moslems.<sup>1</sup> In 638 when the Caliph 'Umar visited the city he possibly erected a simple place of worship of timber or brick on the Moriah hill, where once stood the Temple of Solomon and later a heathen sanctuary and a Christian church. When 'Abd-al-Malik felt the need for a centre of worship that should outshine the Church of the Holy Sepulchre,<sup>2</sup> rival the Mosque of Makkah then in the hands of the anti-caliph 'Abdullah ibn-al-Zubayr and deviate therefrom the current of pilgrimage,<sup>3</sup> he built in 691 on the same site in Jerusalem the Dome of the Rock, wrongly called the "Mosque of 'Umar". The Dome therefore stands on one of the most sacred spots on earth, a spot hallowed by Jewish, heathen, Christian and Moslem associations and considered by tradition the place where Abraham intended to sacrifice his son Isaac. The Kufic inscription round its dome, a part of which was later falsified by the Caliph al-Ma'mun,<sup>4</sup> is one of the oldest Islamic writings extant.<sup>5</sup> 'Abd-al-Malik used materials derived from the Christian buildings that had stood there before they were destroyed or damaged by Chosroes II in 614 and employed native craftsmen, some of whom may have been of Byzantine origin. Here was a radical change from the old pattern, involving the introduction of mosaic and other decorative motifs and a dome intended to surpass the beautiful cupola of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.<sup>6</sup> The result was an architectural monument of such noble beauty that it has scarcely been surpassed anywhere. To the Moslems the Dome of the Rock is more than a place of archaeological interest and artistic value—it is a living symbol of their faith. Although it has gone through

a few changes and repairs, particularly as a result of the terrific earthquake of 1016,<sup>7</sup> the Dome has preserved in general its original form and is therefore the earliest Moslem monument surviving. The oldest description of it is that of ibn-al-Faqlh,<sup>8</sup> written about 903, followed by that of al-Maqdisi<sup>9</sup> written about 985.

<sup>1</sup> For Jerusalem as the scene of judgment day see Nuwayri, 'vol. i, pp. 334 seq.

<sup>2</sup> Maqdisi, p. 159.      <sup>3</sup> Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 311.      <sup>4</sup>  
See above, p. 220.

<sup>6</sup> In the Arab Museum at Cairo is a tombstone found in the cemetery of Old Cairo bearing a Kufic inscription dated A.H. 31/651-2. See Hasan Muhammad al-Hawari in al-Hilal, vol. xxxviii (1930), pp. 1179-91.

<sup>6</sup> Maqdisi, p. 159. The Dome was modelled after the cathedral of Bušra. Cf. M. S. Briggs, *Muhammadian Architecture in Egypt and Palestine* (Oxford, 1924), p. 37.

<sup>7</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, p. 209.      <sup>8</sup> Pp. 100-101.      <sup>9</sup>  
Pp. 169-71.

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The Dome is the shrine of which the Aqsa Mosque is the The Aqṣā sanctuary. The term al-Masjid al-Aqsa, as we have learned Mosque' before, is used in Arabic literature in a general sense to include the whole collection of sacred buildings comprising the Dome itself, the tombs, dervish monasteries (sing, takiyah or zawiyah} and public fountains

(sing, sabll) erected by many caliphs from \*Abd-al-Malik to the Ottoman Sultan Sulayman the Magnificent which cover an area of some thirty-four acres. Strictly, the word Aqsa is applied to the mosque built by \*Abd-al-Malik not far from the Dome. In its construction use was made of the ruins of St. Mary's Church of Justinian, which stood on that site until demolished by Chosroes. The Aqsa was rebuilt about 771 by the 'Abbasid al-Mansur following an earthquake, and was later modified by the Crusaders. Salah-al-Din (Saladin) restored it (1187) to Islam. As in the case of the Dome our earliest description of it dates from ibn-al-Faqih <sup>1</sup> and al-Maqdisi.<sup>2</sup>

In 705 \*Abd-al-Malik's son al-Walid took over the site of the The basilica of Damascus dedicated to St. John, originally a temple M?sq<sup>ad</sup> of Jupiter, and built there the grand mosque named after the Umayyads.<sup>3</sup> How much of the Christian construction was preserved in al-Walid's mosque is difficult to ascertain. The two southern minarets stand on ancient church towers which belonged to the old basilica,<sup>4</sup> but the northern minaret, used as a beacon tower, was certainly constructed by al-Walid and became the model for similar structures in Syria, North Africa and Spain. It is the oldest purely Moslem minaret surviving. The three naves and a transept, above which rises the great dome, with their mosaics, are also the work of this caliph who, we are told, employed Persian and Indian craftsmen as well as Greek artisans provided by the emperor of Constantinople.<sup>5</sup> Papyri recently discovered show that material and skilled workmen were imported from Egypt.<sup>6</sup> The walls were sumptuously decorated with marbles and mosaics. The geographer al-Maqdisi,<sup>7</sup> who visited the mosque in the latter part of the tenth century, speaks

<sup>1</sup> P. 100.

\* Pp. 168-9.

<sup>3</sup> Among the present leading mosques of Aleppo, Him? and Beirut are some which were churches in the past.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Yaqut, vol. ii, p. 593.

<sup>6</sup> Maqdisi, p. 158; ibn-'Asakir, vol. i, p. 202; ibn-Jubayr, p. 261; cf. Tabari, vol. ii, p. 1194.

\* H. I. Bell in *Der Islam*, vol. ii (1911), pp. 274, 374.

<sup>7</sup> P. 157; see also Ištakhri, p. 57; ibn-Rustah, p. 326.

## UMAYYAD MOSQUE OF DAMASCUS: THE COLONNADE AND NORTHERN MINARET

ch. xxi ASPECTS OF LIFE UNDER THE UMAYYADS 267 of its mosaics of gold and precious stones representing trees and cities and bearing beautiful inscriptions. These same representations, covered later by some pious caliph, were rediscovered in 1928.<sup>1</sup> In this mosque we find the first appearance of the semicircular niche for prayer (Jnihrati). Here the horseshoe arch is also apparent. The vignette decorations served as a model for those of the great Qayrawân Mosque as remodelled by the Aghlabids in the ninth century. Though it was burned in 1069, again in 1400 by Tamerlane and for the last time in 1893, the Umayyad Mosque has always held its place in Moslem imagination as the fourth wonder of the world.<sup>2</sup> It is also considered the fourth sanctuary in Islam (above, p. 221).

In the period between the first primitive place of worship of al-Madînah and the two sumptuous mosques of Jerusalem and Damascus the evolution of the Moslem congregational (Jamaah') mosque was rendered complete. The

congregational mosque, be it noted, has always been more than a building for devotion; it serves as a general assembly hall and as a political and educational forum.<sup>3</sup> The physical needs of the congregation are now amply provided for by a sheltered sanctuary and a covered approach; the ritual needs are met by the minarets, niches, pulpits and outside fountains for ablution; and the political needs by a majesty of plan and splendour of ornament that help to serve notice on the world that the followers of the new faith are in no wise behind those who worship in the grand cathedrals of Christendom.

In architectural fields other than the religious the Umayyads left but few monuments. Chief among these are the desert <sup>1</sup>^rah palaces erected by princes of the caliphal family. Most of the caliphs themselves, like the Ghassânid rulers before them, had country seats, and apart from Mu'awiyah and <sup>2</sup>Abd-al-Malik hardly any of them lived in Damascus. In the capital itself nothing is left of the Khadra\*,<sup>4</sup> the imperial residence adjoining the great mosque, nor are any traces left of al-Hajjaj's residence of the same name, al-Qubbah al-Khadra\*,<sup>6</sup> in Wasit. But the

<sup>1</sup> E. de Lorey and M. van Berchem, *Les mosaïques de la mosquée des Omayyades à Damas* (Paris, 1930). K. A. C. Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, pt. I (Oxford, 1932), pp. 119-20.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-al-Faqih, p. 106; Ibn-<sup>\*</sup>Asakir, vol. i, p. 198; Yâqût, vol. ii, p. 591.

<sup>3</sup> In recent years the principal outbreaks against European authority in Syria

and Egypt have had their inception in the Friday mosque meetings.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 215. Ibn-al-Athir, vol. v, p. 224.

\* Balâdhuri, p. 290, • Mas'ûdi, Tanblh, p. 360; Ya'qubi, p. 322

Front B. Morite, "Bilderaus Palästina, Nord-Arabien und dem Sinai" {Dietrich Reimer Verlag, Berlin)

## FAÇADE OF AL-MUSHATTA

fringes of the Syrian desert are strewn with the remains of palaces which were originally either Roman fortresses on the limes repaired and remodelled by Umayyad architects or which were erected by those architects on Byzantine and Persian patterns. The ruins of a palace known by the modern name of al-Ukhaydir lie not far from ʿAyn al-Tamr on the eastern side of the Syrian desert, but it is not certain whether they belong to a late Umayyad or an early 'Abbäsid structure.<sup>31</sup> On the southwestern edge of the desert the remains are more numerous. Here Yazid, son of 'Abd-al-Malik, either built or restored a palace called Muwaqqar,<sup>32</sup> of which few remains are left. His son al-Walīd II, who was addicted to the chase and less innocent pastimes, occupied the neighbouring Qastal<sup>33</sup> and al-Azraq,<sup>34</sup> both Roman posts in Transjordan. To this same Caliph al-Walīd II is ascribed the building of another palace in this region known by the modern name al-Mushatta (al-Mashta),<sup>35</sup> which was the first in this region to be visited by archaeologists. The structure was left unfinished at the death of its caliph-builder. The magnificently carved façade of this beautiful château is now in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin.<sup>6</sup> The best known structure in this group is, however, Qusayr (the little palace of) 'Amrah, lying east of the Jordan in a direct line from the northern edge of the Dead Sea. This castle, built between 712 and 715 probably by al-Walīd I, was



discovered for the learned world by Alois Musil<sup>7</sup> in 1898. The name is presumably modern, since we see no trace of it in Arabic literature.-What makes this building especially remarkable is the extraordinary mural paintings to be discussed in the next section.

Most theologians of Islam maintained that the representation of men and animals was the prerogative of God alone and

considered him who intruded on this domain a blasphemer. This hostile attitude toward representational art, a corollary of the uncompromising monotheism of the Koran and its prohibition of idolatry, derives its direct sanction from a hadith in which the Prophet is reported to have declared that those to be most severely punished on the day of judgment are the painters.<sup>1</sup> The term used, *musawwirun* (portrayers), would apply to sculptors as well. No representation of human beings therefore occurs anywhere on mosques, though in a few cases we find it on palaces and in books. Almost all decorative motifs in Moslem art are derived from the vegetable kingdom or from geometrical figures. The success achieved in later ages in this field is evinced by the term “arabesque” applied to this style of decoration in most of the European languages. But the Arabians themselves had no developed feeling for either plastic or pictorial art, as their remains in the peninsula and the literary descriptions of their sanctuaries clearly indicate. What we call Moslem art was eclectic in its origin, motifs and execution, mostly the product of the artistic genius of the subjugated peoples, but developed under Moslem auspices and peculiarly adapted to the demands of the Moslem religion.

The earliest illustrations of Moslem pictorial art are the frescoes of Qusayr 'Amrah, which suggest workmanship of Christian painters. On the walls of this Transjordanian pleasurehouse and bath of al-Walid I are pictures of six royal personages, including Roderick, the last Visigothic king of Spain.

(Caesar) and "Najashi" (Negus) are inscribed above two of the figures and "Chosroes" (in Greek) above the third. Sasanid influence is manifest in the painting. Other symbolic figures represent Victory, Philosophy, History and Poetry. A hunting-scene depicts a lion attacking a wild ass. A number of nude pictures represent dancers, musicians and merry-makers. The ornament consists of draperies, foliage growing out of vases, vines, palm trees with clusters of fruit, laurel and birds of the desert. The inscriptions are mostly Arabic with a few names in Greek.

In pre-Islamic time the Arabians had various types of song: Music caravan, martial, religious and amorous. Traces of the primitive religious hymns are still preserved in the talbiyah<sup>2</sup>, of the

<sup>1</sup> Bukhari, vol. vii, p. 61.

\* The recitation of the hymn beginning with "Labbayka (here I am); Bukhari, vol. ii, p. 115.

By courtesy of the Akademie der Wissenschaften, Vienna  
PICTURES ON WEST WALL OF THE MAIN HALL OF THE  
QUSAYR 'AMRAH

From a painting by L. Mielich

pilgrimage ceremony. The inshad, or chanting of poetry, is maintained in the cantillation (tajwīd) of the Koran. But the caravan song, *huda*, was their favourite and, in their estimation, the first form of singing. The *huda*—so goes the legend in al-Mas'udi<sup>36</sup>—originated when one of the founders of the race, Mudar ibn-Ma'add,<sup>37</sup> fell from his camel, fractured his hand and in his beautiful voice began to cry, “Ya-yadah! Ya-yadah!” (O, my hand! O, my hand!), which synchronized with the steps of the camel and kept it moving. It was this cry that created the metre of *rajaz* used in caravan songs and the simplest of all poetical metres.

The South Arabians undoubtedly had their own types of song and musical instruments<sup>38</sup> about which very little is known, but it is doubtful whether that tradition formed a part of the heritage of the Northern, and consequently the Moslem, Arabians. The pre-Islamic inhabitants of al-Hijaz used as their principal instruments the square tambourine (*duff*), the flute (*qasabah*, *qassabah*) and the reed pipe or oboe (*zamr*, *mizmar*)\* They also knew the skin-bellied lute (*mizhar*)? At about the time of the Prophet foreign musical influences were beginning to tell. The Ghas-sanid princes kept choruses of Greek girl singers. The Lakhmids of al-Hirah had the Persian wooden-bellied lute *ʿūd*, whence Eng. “lute”), which the Hijazis borrowed. One tradition makes al-Nadr ibn-al-Harith ibn-Kaladah, the physician and poet-minstrel whose pagan recitals competed with the revelations of Muhammad in winning the favour of the people,<sup>39</sup> responsible for the introduction of this instrument into Makkah from al-Hirah.<sup>40</sup> Another tradition credits ibn-Surayj (f ca. 726) with introducing this Persian lute. He is said to have seen it for the first time in the hands of Persian workers brought to Arabia in 684 by 'Abdullah ibn-al-Zubayr to rebuild the Ka'bah.<sup>8</sup> Later the wood-wind instrument called in Persian *nay* (vertical flute) was likewise borrowed,

together with the name, as the researches of Henry G. Farmer<sup>9</sup> indicate. Evidently most of the Jahillyah professional singers were female, and the Aghani? itself a book of songs, has handed down to us the names of a few of them. Some of the elegies mourning the famous hero Sakhr by his sister al-Khansa', a contemporary of the Prophet and celebrated as the greatest poetess of the Arabs, were evidently composed as songs.<sup>41 42</sup> Most of the pre-Islamic poets evidently sang their compositions to music.

Muhammad's denunciation of poets<sup>43</sup> was not directed against them as such but merely as the mouthpieces of heathenism. The Prophet may have looked with disfavour upon music also because of its association with pagan religious rites. According to a hadlth he is said to have declared the musical instrument to be the devil's muezzin, serving to call men to his worship.<sup>44</sup> Most Moslem legists and theologians frowned on music; some condemned it in all its aspects; a few looked upon it as religiously unpraiseworthy (makruh'), though not actually sinful (Jiaraniy, but the view of the masses was better expressed in the adage, "Wine is as the body, music as the soul, and joy is their offspring ?

Soon after the first awe inspired by Islam had worn off the tendency of social change in al-Hijaz veered toward the esthetic side, especially under \*Uthman, the first caliph with a taste for wealth and display. Harmony between voice and instrument was then learned. What the Arabic authors style al-ghina al-mutqan or al-raqlq, artistic or elegant singing, that highly developed type in which there is application of rhythm (zy<T) to the melody of song, became well established in al-Hijaz. Male professional musicians appear for the first time under the sobriquet mukhannathun, i.e. effeminate, men who dyed their hands and affected the manners of women. Such a man was Tuways (the little

peacock, 632-710) of al-Madīnah, considered the father of song in Islam. Tuways is supposed to have introduced rhythm into Arabic music and to have been the first to sing in that language to the accompaniment of an instrument, the tambourine.<sup>6</sup>

The first generation of Moslem singers, headed by Tuways, consisted of foreign libertines. Tuways left a progeny of students, chief among whom was ibn-Surayj (ca. 634-726), regarded as one of the four great singers of Islam.<sup>1</sup> Besides crediting him with the introduction of the Persian lute tradition ascribes to him the use of the baton for directing musical performances. Ibn-Surayj was a freedman, the son of a Turk, and enjoyed the patronage of the famous beauty Sukaynah, daughter of al-Husayn. He counted among his teachers the Makkan negro client Sa'id ibn-Misjah (or Musajjah, f ca. 714). Sa'id, the first Makkan musician and perhaps the greatest of the Umayyad period, is said to have travelled in Syria and Persia and to have been the first to put Byzantine and Persian songs into Arabic.<sup>2</sup> He is evidently the one who systematized Arabian musical theory and practice of classical times. Another student of his was al-Gharid,<sup>3</sup> a half-breed Berber who, as a slave of Sukaynah, was also trained by ibn-Surayj<sup>4</sup> and, after his second master, attained the enviable rank of one of the four singers of Islam. The other two were ibn-Muhriz (f ca. 715), of Persian origin, popularly dubbed “the cymbalist \sannafl of the Arabs”,<sup>5</sup> and Ma'bad (f 743), a Madinese mulatto who was a special favourite at the courts of al-Walid I, Yazid II and al-Walid II.<sup>6</sup> Before settling in the capital Ma'bad had wandered as a minstrel all over Arabia. Among the songstresses (qiyān) Jamilah (f ca. 720), a Madinese freedwoman, was the artistic queen of the first generation.<sup>7</sup> Her residence proved a centre of attraction for the leading musicians and singers of Makkah and al-Madīnah, many of

whom were her pupils; conspicuous among the frequent auditors at her concerts was the poet of love, 'Umar ibn-abi-Rabi'ah. Among her pupils she counted Hababah and Sallamah, the favourites of Yazid II. The crowning event of Jamilah's picturesque career was her imposing pilgrimage to Makkah at the head of a gorgeous procession of singers and songstresses, poets and musicians, admirers and friends, all in gala dress and on richly caparisoned mounts.<sup>8</sup>

Occasional concerts and brilliant musical events held in the

<sup>1</sup> Aghani, vol. i, p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. vol. iii, p. 84.

<sup>3</sup> His first name was 'Abd-al-Malik. Gharid means "the good singer".

<sup>4</sup> Aghani, vol. i, pp. 99-100.  
151.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. vol. i, p.

• Ibid. pp. 19 seq.  
124 stq.

' Ibid. vol. vii, pp.

• Ibid. vol. vii, p. 135.

homes of aristocratic ladies attracted throngs of dilettanti. The wood-bellied lute introduced from Persia through al-Hirah had by this time partly superseded the native skin-bellied lute. Another favourite stringed instrument was the mi zafah, a kind of psaltery. The wind instruments included the flute {qasabaji) and reed pipe (z/zz'^z/z<7z')as wellasthe horn(^zzy). The percussion instruments were represented by the square tambourine, especially favoured by the women, and by the drum (tab!) and cymbals or castanets {sunuf). Notes, when known, were transmitted by word of mouth from one generation to another and have consequently been entirely lost. The Aghani is replete with

verses set to music under the Umayyads, yet it has preserved not a solitary note for us. On the occasion of a visit to al-Hijaz by the Christian Hunayn al-Hlri, dean of the 'Iraq singers, such a crowd gathered at the residence of Sukaynah to hear him that the porch on which they met collapsed, resulting in the death of the distinguished visiting artist.<sup>1</sup> The holy pilgrimage, with all the celebrities it brought from different parts of the Moslem world, afforded the Hijaz musicians and singers an annual opportunity for the display of their talent. It was customary for them on special occasions to meet the caravan and perform en route. The Aghani has left us a description of a pilgrimageparade in which 'Umar ibn-abi-Rabl'ah, the representative of the poetical spirit of the age, clad in his finest attire and flirting with female wayfarers, took the leading part. In his company was ibn-Surayj, whose singing of 'Umar's verses distracted the pilgrims from the observance of their ritualistic ceremonies.<sup>2</sup>

Thus did Makkah, and more particularly al-Madinah, become in the Umayyad period a nursery of song and a conservatory for music.<sup>3</sup> As such they supplied the court of Damascus with an ever-increasing stream of talent. In vain did the conservatives and ulema press their objections, linking music and song with wine-bibbing and gaming as forbidden pleasures (malahi) and quoting Prophetic hadlths which place such diversions among the most powerful means by which the devil seduces men. The tide could not be stemmed; the Muses stood too high in public favour to suffer from such verbal attacks. Their devotees could quote equally striking sayings ascribed to the Prophet <sup>4</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Aghani, vol. ii, p. 127.  
vol. iii, p. 237.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. vol. i, p. 102.

<sup>3</sup> ' Iqd,

<sup>4</sup> Ghazzali, *Ihya' Ulu'ni al-Din* (Cairo, 1334), vol. ii, pp. 238 seq.

## THE HARAM AREA FROM THE NORTH-WEST WITH THE AQSA MOSQUE IN THE BACKGROUND

might very well argue that poetry, music and song did not always tend to debase, that they contributed their share to the refinement of social intercourse and to the sublimation of the relationships between the sexes.<sup>1</sup> It was the second Umayyad caliph, Yazid I, himself a composer, who introduced singing and musical instruments into the Damascus court.<sup>2</sup> He initiated the practice of holding grand festivities in the palace which featured wine and song, hereafter inseparable in royal festivals. \*Abd-al-Malik patronized ibn-Misjah of the Hijaz school. His son al-Walid, the patron of arts, summoned ibn-Surayj and Ma'bad to the capital, where they were received with great honour. Yazid II, successor of the austere and puritanical 'Umar, reinstated poetry and music in public favour through his Hababah and Sallamah.<sup>3</sup> Hisham bestowed his patronage on Hunayn of al-Hirah. The pleasure-loving Walid II, himself a player on the lute and composer of songs, welcomed to his court a host of musician-singers, including the noted Ma'bad.\* His reign coincided with the blossoming of music in the twin cities of al-Hijaz. So widely spread was the cultivation of the musical art under the last Umayyads that it provided their enemies, the 'Abbasid faction, with an effective argument in their propaganda to undermine the house of "ungodly usurpers".

<sup>1</sup> 'Iqd, vol. iii, pp. 225-6; Nawâji, pp. 177-9.

\* Aghâni, vol. xvi, p. 70; cf. Mas'ûdi, vol. v, pp. 156-7.



- Mas'ûdi, vol. v, pp. 446 seq. <sup>4</sup> Ibid. vol. vi, p. 4.

## CHAPTER XXII

### DECLINE AND FALL OF THE Umayyad DYNASTY

#### 4. Marwân I (683-5)

Muhammad

#### 5. \*Abd-al-Malik (685-705)

'Abd-al-'Azî

#### 6. Al-Walid I 7. SULAYMÂN (705-15) (715-U)

#### 9. Yazid II 10. Hishâm

(720-24) (724-43)

#### 8. 'Umar II

(717-20)

#### h. Al-Walid II (743-4)

#### 14. Marwân II (744-50)

#### 12. Yazid III 13. Ibrâhîm (744) (744)

A tree showing the genealogical relationship of the Marwanid caliphs of the Umayyad dynasty

Arab authorities highly esteem Hisham and, as we learned before, rightly rank him after Mu'awiyah and \*Abd-al-Malik as the third and last true statesman of the banu-Umayyah. His four successors, with the exception of Marwan II, who ended the dynasty, proved incapable if not dissolute or

degenerate. Even before the time of Hisham it became the fashion for the caliph, as exemplified by Yazid II, to pass his time in the chase and over his wine cup and to be absorbed more in music and poetry than in the Koran and state affairs. The eunuch system, which made the harem institution possible, was now fully developed. Indulgence in luxury due to increased wealth and a superabundance of slaves was rife. Even the reigning family could no longer boast pure Arabian blood. Yazid III (744) was the first caliph in Islam born of a slave mother.<sup>1</sup> His two successors were also sons of such freed women.<sup>2</sup> Such evils among

Tabari, vol. ii, p. 1874; Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p.401; Mas'udi, vol. vi, pp. 31-2. See below, p. 332.

- Ya'qubi, vol. ii, pp. 403, 404.

the ruling class were only too symptomatic of general moral turpitude. The characteristic vices of civilization, especially those involving wine, women and song, had seized upon the sons of the desert and were beginning to sap the vitality of the youthful Arab society.

### Qays versus Yaman

The ancient and typical weakness of Arabian social life, with its over-emphasis on individualism, tribal spirit (^asabiyali) and feuds, was again reasserting itself. Such bonds as Islam had temporarily provided for holding in check the centrifugal forces latent in social life organized on a large scale were now becoming loose. Beginning with 'Uthman, the hitherto repressed family spirit began to assert itself.

North Arabian tribes had before Islam emigrated into al-Traq, where they established the Diyar Rabi'ah (the abode of the Rabi'ah tribe) along the Tigris, and the Diyar Mudar

(the abode of the Mudar tribe) along the Euphrates. The first place among the banu-Mudar was held by the Qays clan. Other tribes who had settled in Syria originally came from South Arabia and were therefore called Yamanites. In the Yamanite party of Syria the leading faction was the banu-Kalb. The Arabs of Khurasan, the north-eastern province of Persia, were mainly colonists from al-Basrah and were therefore mostly North Arabians; the leading tribe there was Tamim, corresponding to Qays in the Euphrates region. In Khurasan the Yamanite party went by the appellation of Azdite, after the name of the leading family. In other regions the Qaysites were called Nizarites or Ma'addites.<sup>1</sup> But no matter what name these tribes went by the alignment was usually that of North Arabian against South Arabian tribes. Conscious of some deep-rooted national distinction, the North Arabians, who traced their descent to Ishmael and styled themselves 'Adnani, were never fully amalgamated with the South Arabians, who carried their pedigree back to Qahtan, the Joktan of Genesis 10:25 seq. The Qaysites became in course of time the nucleus of one political party, and the Yamanites of another.

Mu'awiyah, the founder of the Umayyad dynasty, raised his Syrian throne on Yamanite shoulders. His son and successor,

On Arab tribes consult ibn-Durayd, *Ishtiqaq* F. Wustenfeld, *Genealogische Tabellen der arabischen Stamme* (Gottingen, 1852); and *Register stt den gen:\*-logtschen Tabellen der arabischen Stamme* (Gottingen, 1853)«

Yazid, whose mother, Maysun, belonged to the Kalbites of the Yamanite party, contracted a marriage with a Kalbite woman. The jealous Qaysites refused to recognize his successor, Mu'awiyah II, and declared for the pseudo-caliph ibn-al-Zubayr. The decisive victory of the Kalbites over the Qaysites at Marj Rahit (684) secured the throne for Marwan,

the father of the Marwanid branch of the Umayyad house. Under al-Walid I Qaysite power reached its culmination in al-Hajjaj and his cousin Muhammad, the conqueror of India, and in Qutaybah, the subduer of Central Asia. Al-Walid's brother Sulayman favoured the Yamanites. Yazid II, however, under the influence of his Mudari mother patronized the Qaysite party, as did al-Walid II; Yazid III relied upon Yamani arms in wresting the sceptre from the hands of his predecessor, al-Walid II. Thus did the caliph in the latter part of the Umayyad period appear to be rather the head of a particular party than the sovereign of a united empire.

The polarization of the Moslem world by this Arab dualism of Qays and Yaman, who also appear under other names, became now complete. It precipitated the downfall of the dynasty and its ill effects were manifest in years to come and in widely separated places. The district of Damascus itself was once the scene of relentless warfare for two years all because, as we are told,<sup>45</sup> a Ma'addite had filched a water-melon from a Yamanite's garden. In distant Murcia in Spain blood is said to have flowed for several years because a Mudarite picked a vine leaf from the yard of a Yamanite.<sup>2</sup> Everywhere, in the capital as well as in the provinces, on the banks of the Indus, the shores of Sicily and the borders of the Sahara, the ancestral feud, transformed into an alignment of two political parties, one against the other, made itself felt. It proved a potent factor in ultimately arresting the progress of Moslem arms in France and in the decline of the Andalusian caliphate. In Lebanon and Palestine the issue seems to have remained a living one until modern times, for we know of pitched battles fought between the two parties as late as the early part of the eighteenth century.

The lack of any definite and fixed rule of hereditary succession The proto the caliphal throne caused no small

measure of national dis- blem of

r . succession

turbance. Mu'awiyah initiated the wise and far-sighted policy

The partisans of 'Ali

'Abbâsid claimants

of nominating his son as his successor, but the antiquated Arabian tribal principle of seniority in succession stood in constant conflict with the natural ambition of the ruling father to pass the sovereignty on to his son. Homage by the people became the only sure title to the throne. Of the fourteen Umayyad caliphs only four—Mu'âwiyah I, Yazîd I, Marwân I and 'Abd-al-Malik—had their sons as immediate successors. The already complicated problem was rendered more complicated by the precedent established when the founder of the Marwânid branch designated his son \*Abd-al-Malik as his successor, to be followed by his other son 'Abd-al-'Aziz.<sup>1</sup> Once in power, \*Abd-al-Malik did the natural thing: he tried to divert the succession from his brother \*Abd-al-'Aziz to his own son al-Walid, in the meantime designating his other son, Sulaymân, as the second nominee.<sup>2</sup> Al-Walid in his turn made an unsuccessful effort to deprive his brother Sulaymân of his right in favour of his own son. All these manoeuvres were, of course, far from being conducive to the stability and continuity of the régime.

The dissentient Shi'ites, who never acquiesced in the rule of the "Umayyad usurpers" and never forgave them the wrong they perpetrated against 'Ali and al-Husayn, became now more active than ever. Their whole-hearted devotion to

the descendants of the Prophet made them the focus of popular sympathy. To their camp rallied many of those who were dissatisfied politically, economically or socially with the rule of the banu-Umayyah. In al-Trâq, where the majority of the population had by now become Shi'ah, opposition to Syrian rule, which arose originally out of the feeling that it deprived their country of its national independence, now took on a religious colour. In the Sunnite ranks themselves, the pietists charged the caliphs with worldliness and neglect of koranic and traditional law and were everywhere ready to give religious sanction to any opposition that might be raised.

Still another destructive force was in operation. The 'Abbâsids, descendants of an uncle of the Prophet, al-\*Abbas ibn-\*Abd-al-Muttalib ibn-Hâshim, began to press their claim to the throne. Cleverly they made common cause with the 'Alids by emphasizing the rights of the house of Hashim. The Shi'ah regarded this family as consisting primarily of the descendants of \* Ali, but <sup>1</sup> Ya'qûbi, vol. ii, p. 306. <sup>1</sup> Ibid. pp. 334-5.

the 'Abbasids included themselves as members of the Hashimite branch of the Quraysh and therefore closer to the Prophet than the banu-Umayyah.[46](#) [47](#)

Taking advantage of the widespread discontent and posing as defenders of the true faith, the descendants of al-'Abbas soon became the champions and leaders of the anti-Umayyad movement. For their headquarters and seat of propaganda they chose a little village south of the Dead Sea, al-Humaymah<sup>48</sup> by name, seemingly harmless and aloof from the rest of the world but in reality strategically close to the caravan route and the junction of the pilgrim roads. Here the stage was set for the earliest and most subtle propagandist movement in political Islam.

Non-Arabian Moslems in general and Persian Moslems in The particular had good reason for dissatisfaction. Far from being Khui-a-<sup>1</sup> <sup>0</sup> . . . . samans

granted the expected economic and social equality with Arabian Moslems, they were instead generally reduced to the position of clients and were not always exempted from the capitation tax paid by non-Moslems. What made them more discontented was the consciousness that they represented a higher and more ancient culture, a fact acknowledged even by the Arabians themselves. It was among such discontented neophytes that the Shi'ite-'Abbasid seed found fertile soil. From al-Traq, always loyal to the 'Alid cause, the Shi'ah doctrine spread into Persia and struck root especially in the north-eastern province, Khurasan, which was then much larger than now. In Persia the way had been somewhat prepared by the Azd-Mudar feud perpetuated by the Arabs. But deeper forces were at work. Under the guise of Shi'ah Islam, Iranianism was revivifying itself.

The zero hour in the life of the Umayyad dynasty approached when a coalition was effected between the Shi'ite, Khurasanian and 'Abbasid forces which was utilized by the last for their own

<sup>1</sup> Hashim

1

\* Abd-al- M uttalib

advantage. This coalition was headed by abu-al-'Abbas, a greatgreat-grandson of al-'Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet. Under his leadership revolutionary Islam opposed the existing order with a feigned ideal of theocracy and a

promise of return to orthodoxy. On June 9, 747, the long-meditated revolt broke out when the 'Abbasid agent in Khurasan, abu-Muslim, a Persian freedman of obscure origin,<sup>49</sup> unfurled the black banner, originally the standard of Muhammad but now the 'Abbasid emblem. At the head of the Azd (Yamani) tribe he entered the capital, Marw, but the majority of his adherents were Iranian peasants and clients rather than Arabs.<sup>50</sup> In vain did Nasr ibn-Sayyar, the Umayyad governor of Khurasan, appeal to Marwan II for aid. In a pathetic letter he had recourse to poetry.<sup>51</sup> But Marwan, though in personal energy and capacity superior to his immediate predecessors, made no response, for his hands were full with an uprising at home which had spread from Palestine to Hims. It was the same old trouble between Qaysites and Yamanites which, exploited by ambitious aspirants to the caliphate, had assumed the proportions of civil war under his two predecessors Yazid III and Ibrahim. Yazid had made matters worse by espousing the Qadarite doctrine. Ibrahim headed the Yamanite party. Marwan II, favoured by the Qaysites, had committed the fatal mistake of transferring not only his residence but also the state bureaux to Harran in Mesopotamia, thus alienating the sympathies of all Syrians. Besides the Syrians, the mainstay of Umayyad power, the Kharijites of al-'Iraq—ever the deadly enemy of established order—were now in open rebellion.<sup>4</sup> In Spain the ancestral feuds were rending in pieces that westernmost province of Islam. For three years the sexagenarian caliph, who previous to his accession had won the sobriquet Marwan al-Himar (the ass) for his unfailing perseverance in warfare,<sup>5</sup> held the field against the Syrian and Kharijite insurgents and proved himself an able general. To him as the military organizer of these campaigns is ascribed the change from fighting in lines (j«/«/), a practice hallowed by association with the Prophet's method of warfare, to that of cohorts (karadis), small units



more compact and at the same time more mobile. But it was too late

<sup>1</sup> Fakhri, p. 184.

ch. xxii DECLINE AND FALL OF Umayyad Dynasty 285 for him to redeem the general situation. The sun of the Banu-Umayyah was fast approaching its setting.

The fall of the capital of Khurasan, Marw, was followed in the final 749 by the fall of the leading city of al-Traql, al-Kufah, the <sup>blow</sup> hiding-place of abu-al-'Abbas, which surrendered to the insurgents without much opposition. Here on Thursday, October 30, 749, public homage was paid in the chief mosque to abu-al-' Abbas as caliph.<sup>52</sup> The first 'Abbasid caliph was thus enthroned. Everywhere the white banner of the Umayyads was in retreat before the black banner of the 'Abbasids and their confederates. Marwan resolved on a last, desperate stand. With 12,000<sup>53</sup> men he advanced from Harran and was met (January 750) on the left bank of the Greater Zab, a tributary of the Tigris, by the enemy forces headed by 'Abdullah ibn-'Ali, an uncle of the new caliph. The will to win and the expectation of victory were no longer on the side of the Syrian army and its defeat was decisive. After the battle of the Zab Syria lay at the feet of the 'Abbasid victors. Its leading towns, one after the other, opened their gates to 'Abdullah and his Khurasani troops. Only at Damascus was it found necessary to lay siege, but the proud capital surrendered on April 26, 750, after a few days. From Palestine 'Abdullah sent a detachment in pursuit of the fugitive caliph, who was caught and killed (August 5, 750) outside a church in which he had sought refuge at Busir<sup>54</sup> (Busiris) in Egypt, where his tomb is still pointed out. His head and, according to al-Mas'udi,<sup>55</sup> the insignia of the caliphate were sent to abu-al-'Abbas.

The 'Abbasids now embarked upon a policy of exterminating the Umayyad house. Their general 'Abdullah shrank from no measure necessary for wiping out the kindred enemy root and branch. On June 25, 750, he invited eighty of them to a banquet at abu-Futrus, ancient Antipatris on the 'Awja' River near Jaffa, and in the course of the feast had them all cut down. After spreading leathern covers over the dead and dying he and his lieutenants continued their repast to the accompaniment of human groans.<sup>1</sup> Agents and spies were sent all over the Moslem world to hunt down fugitive scions of the fallen family, some of whom "sought refuge in the bowels of the earth".<sup>2</sup> The dramatic escape of the youthful 'Abd-al-Rahman ibn-Mu'âwiyah ibn-Hishâm to Spain, where he succeeded in establishing a new and brilliant Umayyad dynasty, belongs to a later chapter. Even the dead were not to escape the ruthless chastisement meted out by the 'Abbâsids. The remains of the caliphs in Damascus, Qinnasrin and other places were exhumed by 'Abdullah and desecrated. The corpse of Sulaymân was dug out from Dâbiq. That of Hishâm was disentombed from al-Rusafah, where it was found embalmed, and after being scourged eighty times was burned to ashes.<sup>3</sup> Only the tomb of the pious 'Umar II escaped violation.

With the fall of the Umayyads the glory of Syria passed away, its hegemony ended. The Syrians awoke too late to the realization that the centre of gravity in Islam had left their land and shifted eastward, and though they made several armed attempts to regain their former importance all proved futile. At last they set their hopes on an expected Sufyâni,<sup>4</sup> a sort of Messiah, to come and deliver them from the yoke of their 'Iraqi oppressors. To the present day one hears Moslems in Syria referring to a forthcoming descendant of Mu'âwiyah. But the Umayyad fall meant more than this. The truly Arab period in the history of Islam had

now passed and the first purely Arab phase of the Islamic empire began to move rapidly toward its close. The 'Abbâsid government called itself dawlah? new era, and a new era it was. The 'Iraqis felt freed from Syrian tutelage. The Shi'ites considered themselves avenged. The clients became emancipated. Al-Küfah, on the border of Persia, was made the new capital. Khurasanians formed the caliphal bodyguard and

<sup>1</sup> Ya'qûbi, vol. ii, pp. 425-6; Mas'ûdi, vol. vi, p. 76; ibn-al-Athir, vol. v, pp. 329-30; Mubarrad, p. 707; Aghâni, vol. iv, p. 161; cf. ibid. pp. 92-6; Fakhri, pp. 203-4; Theophanes, p. 427. Compare the story of Jehu's extermination of Ahab's house (2 K. 9 : 14-34) and the destruction of the Mamluks of Egypt by Muhammad 'Ali (Jurji Zaydân, Tarikh Misr al-Ijadith, 3rd ed., Cairo, 1925, vol. ii, pp. 160-62).

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-Khaldûn, vol. iv, p. 120.

<sup>3</sup> Mas'ûdi, vol. v, p. 471; cf. Ya'qûbi, vol. ii, pp. 427-8. See Fakhri, p. 204.

<sup>4</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, p. 1320; ibn-Miskawayh, Tajârib al-Umam wa-Taaqub al-Himam, ed. de Goeje and de Jong, vol. ii (Leyden, 1871), p. 526; Yâqût, vol. iv, p. 1000; Aghâni, vol. xvi, p. 88; H. Lammens, Études sur le siècle des Omayyades (Beirut, 1930), pp. 391-408.

\* Tabari, vol. iii, p. 85, 11. 16, 17, p. 115, 1. 9.

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Persians occupied the chief posts in the government.

The original Arabian aristocracy was replaced by a hierarchy of officers drawn from the whole gamut of nationalities under the caliphate. The old Arabian Moslems and the new

foreign converts were beginning to coalesce and shade off into each other. Arabianism fell, but Islam continued, and under the guise of international Islam Iranianism marched triumphantly on.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE 'ABBÂSID DYNASTY

The third act in the great political drama of Islam opens with the Caliph abu-al-'Abbas (750-54) playing the chief rôle. Al-Trâq is the stage. In his inaugural khufbah<sup>^</sup> delivered the preceding year in the mosque of al-Kûfah, the first 'Abbâsid caliph referred to himself as al-saffah\* the bloodshedder, which became his sobriquet. This was ominous, since the incoming dynasty, much more than the outgoing, depended upon force in the execution of its policies. For the first time in the history of Islam the leathern spread beside the caliph's seat, which served as a carpet for the use of the executioner, became a necessary adjunct of the imperial throne. This al-Saffah became the founder of the most celebrated and longest-lived Arab dynasty in Islam, the third, after the Orthodox (Râshidûn) and the Umayyad. From 750 to 1258 the successors of abu-al-'Abbas reigned, though they did not always rule.

At the time of its achievement the 'Abbâsid victory was generally hailed as representing the substitution of the true conception of the caliphate, the idea of a theocratic state, for the purely secular state (multi) of the Umayyads. As a mark of the religious character of his exalted office, the caliph now donned on such ceremonial occasions as the day of his accession and the time of the Friday prayer the mantle (burdali) once worn by his distant cousin, the Prophet.<sup>56 57</sup> He surrounded himself with men versed in canon law whom he patronized and whose advice on matters of state affairs

he sought. The highly organized machinery for propaganda which helped to undermine public confidence in the Umayyad regime was now cleverly directed toward permanently entrenching the 'Abbasids in public favour. From the very beginning the idea was cultivated that authority should remain forever in 'Abbasid hands, to be finally delivered to Jesus ('Isa), the Messiah.<sup>58 59</sup> Later the theory was promulgated that if this caliphate were destroyed the whole universe would be disorganized.<sup>60</sup> As a matter of fact the religious change was more apparent than real; although unlike his Umayyad predecessor he assumed piety and feigned religiosity, the Baghdad caliph proved as worldly-minded as he of Damascus whom he had displaced. In one respect there was a fundamental difference: the Umayyad empire was Arab, the 'Abbasid was more inter

Hashim

ancestor of the family), in al-Anbâr.<sup>1</sup> Al-Küfah's sister city, al-Basrah, was avoided for the same reason, also because of its southern situation, which made it unsuitable for a centre of a kingdom. In his newly erected capital al-Saffâh died (754) of smallpox in his early thirties.<sup>2</sup>

Al-Mansûr, the real founder of the dynasty

His brother and successor, abu-Ja'far (754~75), who now assumed the honorific title al-Mansûr (rendered victorious [by God]), proved one of the greatest, though most unscrupulous, of the 'Abbâsids. He, rather than al-Saffâh, was the one who firmly established the new dynasty. All the thirty-five caliphs who succeeded were his lineal descendants. His uncle 'Abdullah, the hero of the Zâb and under al-Saffâh the governor of Syria, now disputed the caliphate with his nephew, but was defeated (November 754) by abu-Muslim at Nasîbîn (Nisibis). After seven years'

imprisonment he was ceremoniously conducted into a house the foundations of which had been purposely laid on salt surrounded by water, which buried him under its ruins.<sup>3</sup> Immediately after the victory of Nasībīn the turn of abu-Muslim himself came. On his way back to his province, Khurasan, which he ruled almost independently, abu-Muslim was induced to turn aside from his march and visit the caliphal court. The Khurâsâni leader, to whose sword after that of 'Abdullah the 'Abbâsids owed their throne, was attacked while having an audience with the caliph and treacherously put to death.<sup>4</sup> A curious new sect of Persian extremists, the Râwandīyah, who tried to identify the caliph with God, were mercilessly put down (758).<sup>5</sup> The revolt of the disgruntled Shī'ah, headed by Ibrâhîm and by his brother Muhammad, surnamed al-Nafs al-Zakīyah (the pure soul), the great-grandsons of al-Hasan,<sup>6</sup> was ruthlessly crushed. Muhammad was killed and gibbeted (December 6, 762) in al-Madinah; Ibrâhîm was decapitated (February 14, 763) near the unruly Kūfah and his head dispatched to the caliph.<sup>7</sup> To the irreconcilable 'Alids the 'Abbâsid caliphs were usurpers, the rightful caliphs, imâms, being the descendants of 'Ali and Fâtimah.

<sup>1</sup> On the left bank of the Euphrates, in the north of al-Trâq. The site is today quite waste.

<sup>2</sup> Ya'qūbi, vol. ii, p. 434; Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 87-8.

<sup>8</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, p. 330.  
pp. 376-8.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. pp. 105-17; Dinawari,

<sup>5</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 129-33; Mas'ûdi, vol. vi, pp. 26, 54 seq.; Baghdadi, ed. Ilitti, p. 37. Râwand was a town near Isbahân.

<sup>8</sup> See genealogical tree on following page.

' Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 245-65,315-16; Mas'ûdi, vol. vi, pp. 189-203; Dīnawari.p.381.

The \*Alids never ceased to exercise a disruptive influence on the body politic of Islam, and persisted in claiming for their imams a measure of hereditary wisdom derived from the Prophet, as well as a sort of special divine illumination. In Khurasan the insurrection of Sunbad (Sinbadh) the Magian (755), who came out as the avenger of abu-Muslim, and that of Ustadhsis (767-8), were quenched;<sup>1</sup> Persia, where strong national sentiments were interwoven with ancient Zoroastrian and Mazdakian religious ideas, was at least temporarily pacified. Thus was the greater part of the Islamic empire once more consolidated, with the

'Abd-al-Muṭṭalib

|

Al-'Abbas (ancestor of 'Abbāsīd caliphs)

| 'Abdullāh

Abu-jalib

Muhammad

Fâtimah + 'Alī ' |

Al-Hasan

Al-Husayn

|

,

|

Al-Hasan

'|

'Abdullah

|

!-----1

Ibrâhîm (f 763) Muhammad (f 762)

The descendants of 'Ali

exception of North Africa, where the caliph's authority did not extend much beyond al-Qayrawan, and of Spain, where the 'Abbasid caliph found in the Umayyad 'Abd-al-Rahman (whose mother, like al-Mansûr's,<sup>2</sup> was a Berber slave) more than his match.

With the domestic situation well in hand the baneful frontier wars with the eternal enemy to the west, the Byzantines, which had been carried on intermittently for over a century, were resumed in the nature of raids on neighbouring strongholds. The ruined border fortresses (Jhughilr) of Malatyah (Melitene) in Lesser Armenia and al-Massîsah in Cilicia were restored.<sup>3</sup> Even

<sup>1</sup> 'Jabari, vol. iii, pp. 119-20, 354-8; Ya'qûbi, vol. ii, pp. 441-2; ibn-al-Athir, vol. v, pp. 368-9.

<sup>2</sup> Ya'qûbi, vol. ii, p. 436; ibn-Qutaybah, Ma'arif, p. 191.

• Ya'qûbi, Buldân, p. 238, l. 5.

the naphtha springs of Baku<sup>1</sup> were reached and a tax levied on them. Mountainous Tabaristan, south of the Caspian (Bahr al-Khazar), where a family of high functionaries of the defunct Sasanid empire had maintained a virtually independent rule, was now temporarily annexed.<sup>2</sup> On the Indian frontier Qandahar (al-Qunduhar), among other places, was reduced, and a statue of the Buddha found in it was demolished.<sup>3</sup> In fact, al-Mansur's lieutenants carried their raids as far as Kashmir (Ar. Qashmir), the rich and extensive valley of the north-west Himalaya. A fleet was



dispatched (770) from al-Basrah to the delta of the Indus to chastise pirates who had ventured to plunder Juddah.

### Madinat al-Salâm

In 762 al-Mansur, who had his residence at al-Hashimiyah between al-Kufah and al-Hirah,<sup>4</sup> laid the foundation stone of his new capital, Baghdad, scene of the legendary adventures so brilliantly commemorated by Shahrazad in *The Thousand and One Nights*. The site was an ancient one occupied by a Sasanid village of the same name,<sup>5</sup> meaning “given by God”. Al-Mansur fixed on the site after canvassing a number of others “because”, said he, “it is excellent as a military camp. Besides, here is the Tigris to put us in touch with lands as far as China and bring us all that the seas yield as well as the food products of Mesopotamia, Armenia and their environs. Then there is the Euphrates to carry for us all that Syria, al-Raqqah and adjacent lands have to offer.”<sup>6</sup> In the construction of his city, completed in four years, al-Mansur spent some 4,883,000 dirhams<sup>7</sup> and employed about a hundred thousand architects, craftsmen and labourers drawn from Syria, Mesopotamia and other parts of the empire.<sup>8</sup>

Madinat al-Salam (city of peace), which was the official name given by al-Mansur to his city, lay on the west bank of the Tigris in that same valley which had furnished sites for some of the mightiest capitals of the ancient world. It was circular in form, whence the name the Round City {al-mudawwarah\ with double brick walls, a deep moat and a third innermost wall rising

<sup>1</sup> Mas'udi, vol. ii, p. 25; Yaqut, vol. i, p. 477.

<sup>2</sup> Ya'qubi, vol. ii, pp. 446-7.

<sup>3</sup> Baladhuri, p. 445; Yaqut, vol. iv, pp. 183-4; Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 449.

<sup>4</sup> Ya'qubi, Buldan, p. 237.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. p. 235; Baladhuri, p. 294 = Hitti, p. 457.

<sup>G</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, p. 272.

<sup>7</sup> Al-Khatib (al-Baghdadi), Tarikh Baghdad, vol. i (Cairo, 1931), pp. 69 70; Tabari, vol. iii, p. 326; Yaqut, vol. i, p. 683.

<sup>8</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, p. 276; Ya'ubj. Bn-Idim, p. 238; Khatib, vol. i, pp. 66-7. ninety feet and surrounding the central area. The walls had four equidistant gates from which four highways, starting from the centre of the circle, radiated like the spokes of a wheel to the four corners of the empire. The whole thus formed concentric circles with the caliphal palace, styled the Golden Gate (bab al-dhahab) on account of its gilded entrance, or the Green Dome (al-qubbah. al-Jzhadra\ as the hub. Beside the palace stood the great mosque. The dome of the audience chamber, after which the imperial palace was named, rose to a height of one hundred and thirty feet. Later tradition topped it by the figure of a mounted man holding a lance which in time of danger pointed the direction from which the enemy might be expected.<sup>1</sup> But Yaqut, quick to detect the fallacy, remarks that the figure necessarily pointed always in some direction, which would mean the existence of a constant enemy threatening the city, and declares the Moslems "too intelligent to believe such fabrications".<sup>2</sup> The adjacent ruins of the Sasanid capital, Ctesiphon, served as the main quarry for the new city and furnished the necessary building material, while brick was also

made on the spot. Before his death al-Mansur built on the bank of the Tigris outside the walls another palace, Qasr al-Khuld (palace of eternity), so called because its gardens were supposed to rival those of Paradise (Koran 25 : 16-17), and farther north a third palace called al-Rusafah (causeway), which was intended for the crown prince, the caliph's son al-Mahdi.

The horoscope under which al-Mansur started the building of this military post for himself, his family and his Khurasanian bodyguard certainly proved fully as auspicious as predicted by the court astrologer.<sup>3</sup> In a few years the town grew into an emporium of trade and commerce and a political centre of the greatest international importance. As if called into existence by a magician's wand this city of al-Mansur fell heir to the power and prestige of Ctesiphon, Babylon, Nineveh, Ur and other capitals of the ancient Orient, attained a degree of prestige and splendour unrivalled in the Middle Ages, except perhaps by Constantinople, and after many vicissitudes was recently resuscitated as the capital of the new 'Iraqi kingdom under a truly Arabian king, Faysal.

<sup>1</sup> Khatib, vol. i, p. 73.

<sup>2</sup> Yol. i p 653.

\* Yaqut, vol. i, pp. 684-5; Khatib, vol. i, pp. 67-8

The new location opened the way for ideas from the East. Here the caliphs built up a government modelled on Sâsânid Chosroism. Arab Islam succumbed to Persian influence; the caliphate became more of a revival of Iranian despotism and less of an Arabian sheikdom. Gradually Persian titles, Persian wines and wives, Persian mistresses, Persian songs, as well as Persian ideas and thoughts, won the day. Al-Mansûr, we are told, was the first to adopt the characteristic Persian head-gear (pl. qalanis\ in which he

was naturally followed by his subjects.<sup>1</sup> ' Persian influence, it should be noted, softened the rough edges of the primitive Arabian life and paved the way for a new era distinguished by the cultivation of science and scholarly pursuits. In two fields only did the Arabian hold his own: Islam remained the religion of the state and Arabic continued to be the official language of the state registers.

### A Persian vizirial family

Under al-Mansür the vizirate, a Persian office, appears for the first time in Islamic government. Khalid ibn-Barmak was the first incumbent of that high office.<sup>2</sup> Khalid's mother was a prisoner whom Qutaybah ibn-Muslim captured (705) in Balkh; his father was a barmak, i.e. chief priest, in a Buddhist monastery in the same place.<sup>3</sup> Khalid was on such intimate terms with al-Saffah that his daughter was nursed by the wife of the former caliph, whose daughter was likewise nursed by Khalid's wife.<sup>4</sup> Early under the 'Abbasid regime Khalid rose to the headship of the department of finance (dīwân al-kharaf}. In 765 he received the governorship of Tabaristân, where he crushed a dangerous uprising.<sup>5</sup> In his old age he distinguished himself at the capture of a Byzantine fortress.<sup>6</sup> Though not actually a vizir,<sup>7</sup> a minister in the later sense of the term, this official of Persian origin seems to have acted on various occasions as counsellor for the caliph and became the founder of an illustrious family of vizirs.

On October 7, 775, al-Mansür died near Makkah while on a pilgrimage. He was over sixty years of age. One hundred graves were dug for him near the Holy City, but he was secretly interred in another which no enemy might find and desecrate.<sup>8</sup> He was a

<sup>1</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, p. 371.  
vol. i, p. 290.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. ibn-Khallikân,

v here wazlr for al-Hamdâni is probably used in same sense as in stir. 20 : 30.

\* Ibn-al-Faqih. pp. 322-4; Tabari, vol. ii, p. 1181; Yâqût vol. iv, p. S18.

<sup>4</sup> Tabari, vol. ii, p. 840.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn-al-Faqih, p. 314.

‘ Tabari, vol. iii, p. 497.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Fakhri, pp. 206, 211: Mas’ûdi, Tanbîh, p. 340.

- Ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi, p. 13.

slender, tall man, dark of complexion and thin-bearded.<sup>1</sup> Austere in nature and stern in manner, he stands in marked contrast to the type represented by his successors. But his policies continued for many generations to guide those who came after him just as those of Mu'àwiyah had guided the Umayyads.

To Khalid's son Yahya, al-Mansur's successor, al-Mahdi (775-85), entrusted the education of his son Harun. When Harun, following the brief reign of his brother al-Hadi (785-6), became caliph he appointed the Barmakid, whom he still respectfully called "father", as vizir with unrestricted power. Yahya, who died in 805, and his two sons al-Fadl and Ja'far practically ruled the empire from 786 to 803.<sup>2</sup>

These Barmakids had their palaces in eastern Baghdad, where they lived in grand style. Here Ja'far's palace, al-Ja fari, became the nucleus of a large group of magnificent residences later occupied by al-Ma'mûn and transformed into the Caliphal Palace {dar al-khilàfah}. The buildings

stood by the Tigris with spacious gardens behind enclosing many minor structures within their precincts. Fabulous fortunes were amassed by the members of the Barmakid family. Even what they saw fit to bestow on their clients, panegyrists and partisans was enough to make such proteges wealthy. Their generosity was proverbial. Even today in 'all the Arabic-speaking lands the word barmaki is used as a synonym of generous, and "as munificent as Ja far '<sup>3</sup> is a simile that is everywhere well understood.

A number of canals,<sup>4</sup> mosques and other public works owe their existence to the initiative and munificence of the Barmakids. Al-Fadl is credited with being the first in Islam to introduce the use of lamps in the mosques during the month of Ramadan. Ja'far acquired great fame for eloquence, literary ability and penmanship.<sup>5</sup> Chiefly because of him Arab historians regard the Barmakids as the founders of the class designated "people of the pen" {ahi al-qalam). But he was more than a man of letters. He was a leader of fashion, and the long neck which he possessed is said to have been responsible for the introduction of the custom of wearing high collars.<sup>6</sup> Ja'far's intimacy with the

<sup>1</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, p. 391; ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi, p. 14; Mas'udi, Tanbih, p. 341.

<sup>2</sup> Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 520.      ® Consult ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, pp. 183 seq»

<sup>4</sup> See Tabari, vol. iii, p. 645, ll. 18-191 Baladhuri. p. 3<sup>^</sup>3-

\* Tabari, vol. ii, p. 843, Mas'udi, vol. vi, p. 30n

• Jàhiz, Havàn, vol. iii, p. 201.

Caliph Harun was not pleasing to his father, Yahya, as it was suspiciously immoral.<sup>1</sup>

The time at last came for the caliph to rid himself of this Persian tutelage. The Shi'ite Barmakids were getting too powerful for the strong-willed Harun (786-809), in whose caliphal firmament there could not be two suns. First the thirty-seven-year-old Ja'far was slain in 803; his severed head was impaled on one bridge of Baghdad and the two halves of his body on the other two bridges.<sup>2</sup> The usual reason given by historians is that the caliph had allowed him, as a boon companion, to marry in name only his favourite sister, al-'Abbasah, but discovered later while on a holy pilgrimage that she had secretly given birth to a son whom she had concealed in Makkah.<sup>3</sup> The aged Yahya, together with his distinguished son al-Fadl and his other two sons, were all apprehended and cast into prison. Both Yahya and al-Fadl died in confinement. All the property of the family, said to have amounted to 30,676,000 (dinars) in cash exclusive of farms, palaces and furniture, was confiscated.<sup>4</sup> Thus the celebrated house founded by Khalid al-Barmaki fell, never to rise again.

<sup>1</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 674-6.

• 'Iqd, vol. iii, p. 28; Tabari, vol. iii, p. 680.

<sup>3</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 676-7; Mas'udi, vol. vi, pp. 387-94; Fakhri, p. 288. Cf. ibn-Khaldun, vol. iii, pp. 223-4; Kitab al-'Uyun, pt. 3, pp. 306-8.

<sup>4</sup> 'Iqd, vol. iii, p. 28.

## THE GOLDEN PRIME OF THE 'ABBÄSIDS

Al-'Abbas

I. Al-Saffah (750)

-----)

2. Al-Manşür (754)

3. Al-Mahdi (775)

4. Al-Hädi (785)

5. Al-Rashid (786)

6. Al-Amin (809)

7. Al-Ma'mün (813)

8. Al-Mu'taşim (833)

9. Al-Wäthiq (842)

10. Al-Mutawakkil (847)

The 'Abbasid dynasty, like others in Moslem history, attained its most brilliant period of political and intellectual life soon after its establishment. The Baghdad caliphate founded by al-Saffah and al-Mansur reached its prime in the period between the reigns of the third caliph, al-Mahdi, and the ninth, al-Wathiq, more particularly in the days of Harun al-Rashid and his son al-Ma'mun. It was chiefly because of these two luminous caliphs that the 'Abbasid dynasty acquired a halo in popular imagination and became the most celebrated in the history of Islam. The dictum quoted by the anthologist al-Tha'alibi<sup>1</sup> (f 1038) that of the 'Abbasid caliphs “the opener” was al-Mansur, “the middler” was al-



Ma'mun and "the closer" was al-Mu'tadid (892-902) is therefore not far from the historical truth. After al-Wathiq the state starts on its downward course until under the Caliph al-Musta'sim, the thirty-seventh of the line, it meets its final destruction at the hands of the Mongols in 1258. An idea of the degree of power and glory and progress attained by the Abbasid caliphate at its highest and best may be gained from a scrutiny of its foreign relations, a study of court and aristocratic life in

1 Lata if al-Madrif, ed. P. de Jong (Leyden, 1867), p. 71.

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its capital, Baghdad, and a survey of the unparalleled intellectual awakening that culminated under the patronage of al-Ma'mün.

### Relations with the Franks

The ninth century opened with two imperial names standing supreme in world affairs: Charlemagne in the West and Hârûn al-Rashid in the East. Of the two Hârûn was undoubtedly the more powerful and represented the higher culture. The mutual friendly relations into which these two contemporaries entered were, of course, prompted by self-interest; Charlemagne cultivated Hârûn as a possible ally against hostile Byzantium and Hârûn desired to use Charlemagne against his rivals and deadly foes, the neighbouring Umayyads of Spain, who had succeeded in establishing a mighty and prosperous state. This reciprocity of cordial feelings found expression, according to Western writers, in the exchange of a number of embassies and presents. A Frankish author who knew Charlemagne personally and is sometimes referred to as his secretary relates that the envoys of the great king of the West

returned home with rich gifts from “the king of Persia, Aaron”, which included fabrics, aromatics and an elephant.<sup>61</sup>  
<sup>62</sup> This account is based on the *Annales royales*? which further speaks of an intricate clock as among the gifts from Baghdâd. But the account of the pipe organ sent to Charlemagne by Hârûn, like many other charming bits of history, is fictitious. Its story is apparently based on a mistranslation of the term *clepsydra* in the sources, which in reality meant a device for measuring time by water and referred to the clock presented. Likewise the assertion that the keys of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre were delivered by Hârûn’s consent to Charlemagne has been discredited.<sup>63</sup>

The strange thing about this exchange of embassies and gifts, said to have taken place between 797 and 806, is the utter silence of Moslem authors regarding it. While reference is made to various other diplomatic exchanges and courtesies, none is made to this. The *ʿ1^Z*<sup>64</sup> cites several cases of correspondence between Umayyad caliphs and Byzantine emperors and speaks of a delegation from “the king of India” which brought Hârûn

<sup>1</sup>

Ibn-al-Jawzi, *Naqd al-'l Im w-al- Ulamd'* (Cairo, 1340), p. 102.

<sup>2</sup>

Shahrastani, p. 100; Baghdadi, ed. Hitti, pp. 87-8; Iji, p. 356.

<sup>3</sup>

• Cf. Baghdadi, op tit. pp. 122-3; ibn-Hazm, vol. ii, p. 89..

<sup>4</sup>

Suyüti, Husn, vol. i, p. 134; cf. Kindi, Wuläh, p. 89.

[5](#)

\* Mentioned by Jähiz, Bayän, vol. i, p. 175, as a tutor to 'Abd-al-Malik's sons.

[6](#)

' Ibn-Sa'd, vol. vi, p. 210. [7](#) Yäqüt, Udaba , vol. ii, p. 239. [9](#) P. 412.

[7](#)

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, \* Uyün al-Anba fi Tabaqdt al-Atibba , ed. A. Müller (Cairo,

[8](#)

1882), vol. i, p. 109; ibn-al-'lbri, p. 156.

[9](#)

' Ibn-al-Tbri, pp. 156-7; Qifti, Hukamä', p. 161.

[10](#)

• Ibn-abi-U?aybi'ah, vol. i, p. 113; cf. Nawawi Tahahib, p. 593.

[11](#)

Ibn-abi-Usaybi\*ah, vol. i, p. 116. \* Ibid. p. 121; see above, p. 220.

[12](#)

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-al-Tbri, p. 192.  
ii, p. 1196.

\* Ibid. p. 195; Tabari, vol.

[13](#)

<sup>6</sup> Ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. i, p. 116, 11. 25-6.  
242, 354.

[18](#) Pp.

[14](#)

' Julius Ruska, Arabische Alchemisten, I. Châlid Ibn Jazïd Ibn  
lluawija

[15](#)

(Heidelberg, 1924), pp. 8 seq.

[16](#)

<sup>8</sup> Fihrist, p. 317, 1. 25; ibn-Khallikân, vol. i, p. 185 = de  
Slane, vol. i, p. 300;

[17](#)

Hâjji Khalfah, Kashf al-Zunûn 'an Asâmi al-Kutub w-al-Funûn,  
ed. Fluegel,

[18](#)

vol. ii (Leipzig, 1837), pp. 581, 604, vol. iii (London, 1842),  
pp. 53, 128.

[19](#)

• J. Ruska, Arabische Alchemisten, II. ôdfar Alfâdiq, der  
Sechste Imam (Heidelberg, 1924), pp. 49-59.

[20](#)

Baladhuri, pp. 346-7, 350; Yaqut, Buldan, vol. i, p. 642.

[21](#)

<sup>1</sup> Tabari, vol. i, p. 2489; Yaqut, vol. iv, pp. 323-4. 8  
Pp. 211-12.

[22](#)

<sup>4</sup> For the many early rebuildings it underwent see Yaqvlt, vol. iii, pp. 899-900.

[23](#)

Maqrizi (Bulaq), vol. ii, p. 248, 1. 30. [24](#) Yaqut, vol. iv, p. 213.

[24](#)

<sup>3</sup> Tabari, vol. i, pp. 2443, 2451.

[25](#)

<sup>4</sup> Baladhuri, p. 125; Yaqut, vol. ii, p. 591, • ibn-Jubayr, p. 262.

[26](#)

<sup>6</sup> Iṣṭakhri, p. 61; ibn-Hawqal, p. 117; Maqdisi, p. 156.

[27](#)

<sup>8</sup> Maqrizi, vol. ii, p. 247, 11. 16-17; Maqdisi, p. 80, 1. 17; ibn-Battutah, vol. i, pp. 271, 272; ibn-Duqmaq, al-Intisar li-Wasifat \*Iqd al-Amsar, ed. Vollers (Bulaq,

[28](#)

1893), pt. iv, p. 62, l. 12; Suyuti, Husn, vol. ii, p. 149.

[29](#)

Ibn-al-Faqih, p. 109, l. 2.

[30](#)

Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 571. Others ascribe it to Marwan ibn-al-Hakam (Baladhuri, p. 6, l. 16 = Hitti, p. 20) or to 'Uthman (Maqrizi, vol. ii, p. 247, l. 32).

[31](#)

Gertrude L. Bell, Palace and Mosque at Ukhaider (Oxford, 1914), p. 167.

' Yäqūt, vol. iv, p. 687. Al-Balqä', where the palace stood, was the southern region of the eastern Jordan district and comprised ancient Moab.

<sup>3</sup> From Latin castellum, castle. Yäqūt, vol. iv, p. 95.

<sup>4</sup> Tabari, vol. ii, p. 1743.

<sup>5</sup> Bedouin pronunciation Mshatta, winter resort.

- Consult R. E. Brünnow and A. v. Domaszewski, Die Provincia Arabia, vol. ii (Strassburg, 1905), pp. 105-70; B. Schulz and J. Strzygowski, "Mschatta", Jahrbuch der königlich-preussischen Kunstsammlungen, vol. xxv (1904), pp.

[32](#)

O5-373-

[33](#)

<sup>7</sup> Kusejr 'Amra und andere Schlösser östlich von Moab,  
pt. I (Vienna, 1902),

[34](#)

pp. 5 seq.\ Musil, Kusejr 'Amra, I. Textband (Vienna, 1907).  
Musil considered al-

[35](#)

Walid II the builder.

[36](#)

Vol. viii, p. 92.  
20.

[36](#) Cf. "Almodad" in 1 Ch. 1 :

[37](#)

\* Mas'udi, vol. viii, p. 93.  
p. 175.

[65](#) [66](#) Aghdni, vol. ii,

[38](#)

<sup>8</sup> ' Iqd, vol. iii, p. 237; Mas'udi, vol. viii, p. 93.

[39](#)

\* In Journal Royal Asiatic Society pp. 119 seq., pp.  
489 seq.\ A History

[40](#)

of Arabian Music to the XIIIth Century (London, 1929), p. 7.

[41](#)

Vol. viii, p. 3, vol. x, p. 48. \* Agham, vol. xiii, p. 140. [43](#)  
Sur. 26 : 224-6.

[42](#)

<sup>4</sup> Consult Nuwayri, Nihayah, vol. iv, pp. 132-5; Farmer, Arabian Music, pp. 24-5; A. J. Wensinck, A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition (Leyden, 1927), p. 173-

[43](#)

• Nawaji, p. 178. Consult Nuwayri, vol. iv, pp. 136 seq.

[44](#)

Aghani, vol. ii, pp. 170, 171, 173.

[45](#)

Alu-al-Fida', vol. ii, p. 14. \* Ibn-'Idhari, Baydn, vol. ii, p. 84.

[46](#)

• Abdullah                      Abu-Talib                      Al-'Abbas

[47](#)

• r vk



[48](#)

Muhammad                      ALi + Fafimah

» Ya'qubi, vol. ii, pp. 356-7; Fakhri, pp. 192-3; Tabari, vol. iii, p. 34; Yaqut, vol. ii, p. 342; Musil, Northern Hegdz (New York, 1926), pp. 56-61 and map in pocket.

[49](#)

Cf. Fakhri, p. 186.        [50](#) Tabari, vol. ii, pp. 1953 seq.-, Dinawari, pp. 359 seq,

[50](#)

- Fakhri, p. 194; Nicholson, Literary History, p. 251.

[51](#)

- Tabari, vol ii pp. 1943-9.

[52](#)

Ya'qubi, vol. ii, pp. 417-18; Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 27-33; Mas'udi, vol. vi, pp. 87,98.

[53](#)

» Tabari, vol. iii, p. 47 (of. p. 45)- See above, p. 226.

[54](#)

Also Abusir, probably Bu\$ir al-Malaq in the Fayyum. Consult Sawirus ibn-al-Muqaffa', Siyar al-Baldrikah al-Iskandardniyin, ed. C. F. Seybold (Hamburg, 1912), pp. 181 seq.\ Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 49'5°

[55](#)

\* Vol. vi, p. 77.

[56](#)

Tabari, vol. iii, p. 30, 1. 20; ibn-al-Athir, vol. v, p. 316.

[57](#)

The genealogical tree on the following page makes clear the relationship between the 'Abbâsids and Muhammad.

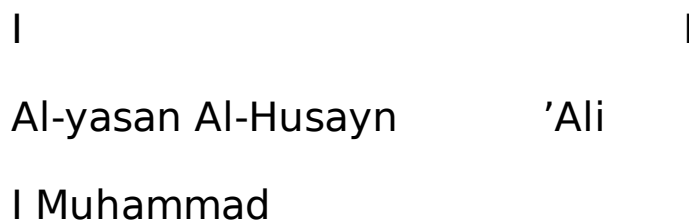
[58](#)



[59](#)



[60](#)



[61](#)

Éginhard, Vie de Charlemagne, ed. and tr. L. Halphen (Paris, 1923), p. 47.

[62](#)

“Annales regni Francorum”, ed. G. H. Pertzii and F. Kurze in *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum*, vol. 43 (Hanover, 1895), pp. 114-123.

[63](#)

\* See below, pp. 507, 635-6. Cf. Louis Bréhier in *Chambre de Commerce de Marseille. Congrès français de Syrie. Séances et travaux*, fasc. 2 (1961), pp. 15-39.

[64](#)

Vol. i, pp. 197-8.

[65](#)

\* He is supposed to be the one referred to in sur. 31 : 5-6.

[66](#)

<sup>7</sup> Mas'udi, vol. viii, pp. 93-4.

<sup>8</sup> Aghdni, vol. i, p. 98.

299 valuable presents and was received with great pomp. Another source<sup>1</sup> states that Harun's son al-Ma'mun received an especially rich gift from his contemporary "the king of the Romans", possibly Michael II.

The more-than-century-old struggle between the caliphate and with the the Byzantine empire was resumed by the third caliph, al-<sup>t^\*n'</sup> Mahdi (775-85), but the engagements were of less frequency and success. The internal conflicts that convulsed the Arab state and resulted in the transference of the capital to distant Baghdad had made it possible for Constantine V (741-75) to push the imperial border farther east along the entire boundary of Asia Minor and Armenia.<sup>2</sup> The Moslem line of frontier fortifications (Jhughur) extending from Syria to Armenia retreated as the Byzantine line opposite advanced. •

Al-Mahdi, the first 'Abbasid caliph to resume the "holy war" against the Byzantines, initiated a brilliant and successful attack against the enemy capital itself. Harun, his young son and future successor, commanded the expedition. In 782<sup>3</sup> the Arab forces reached the Bosphorus,<sup>4</sup> if not Constantinople itself; and Irene, who held the regency in the name of her son Constantine VI. was forced to sue for peace and conclude a singularly humiliating treaty involving the payment of a tribute of 70,000 to 90,000 dinars in semi-annual instalments.<sup>5</sup> It was in the course of this campaign that Harun so distinguished himself that his father gave him the honorific title al-Rashid (follower of the right path) and designated him the second heir apparent to the throne, after his elder brother Musa al-Hadi.

This proved the last time that a hostile Arab army stood before the walls of the proud capital. In all there were four distinct expeditions which reached Byzantium; the first

three were sent under the Umayyads by Mu'awiyah and by Sulayman.<sup>6</sup> Of the four only two involved real sieges of the city: one by Yazid (49/669) and the other by Maslamah (98/716). Turkish tradition,

<sup>1</sup> Kutubi, Fawat, vol. i, p. 307, 11. 12-13.

<sup>2</sup> A. A. Vasiliev, History of the Byzantine Empire, tr. S. Ragozin, vol. i (Madison, 1928), p. 291; Charles Diehl, History of the Byzantine Empire, tr. G. B. Ives (Princeton, 1925), p. 55.

<sup>3</sup> Kitab al-Uyun, pt. 3, p. 278, dates the expedition 163 (a.d. 780), Ya'qubi (vol. ii, pp. 478, 486) 164 and Tabari (vol. iii, pp. 5°3¼) 165

<sup>14</sup> Theophanis, who wrote in 813, says (p. 456) that Harun advanced as far as Chrysopolis, on the site of modern Scutari.

<sup>6</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, p. 504.  
200 se\$.

• See above, pp.

however, makes the sieges seven to nine in number, of which two are ascribed to Harun. In the Arabian Nights and other Arabic romances of chivalry the Moslem expeditions against Constantinople form the subject of themes highly coloured and developed during the period of the Crusades.

Irene (797-802), who had seized the throne and become "the first instance in Byzantine history of a woman who ruled with full authority of supreme power",<sup>1</sup> was succeeded by Nicephorus I<sup>2</sup> (802-11), who repudiated the terms of the treaty contracted by the empress and even demanded from the caliph, now al-Rashid, the return of the tribute already

paid. Inflamed with rage, al-Rashid called for pen and ink and wrote on the back of the scornful epistle:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

From Harun, the commander of the believers, to Nicephorus, the dog of a Roman.

Verily I have read thy letter, O son of an infidel mother. As for the answer it shall be for thine eye to see, not for thine ear to hear. Salam.<sup>3</sup>

True to his word, Harun started at once a series of campaigns directed from his favourite town of residence, al-Raqqah, situated beside the - Euphrates and commanding the Syrian frontier. These expeditions ravaged Asia Minor and culminated in the capture of Heraclea (Ar. Hiraqlah) and Tyana (al-Tuwanah) in 806 and the imposition, in addition to the tribute, of an ignominious tax on the emperor himself and on each member of his household.<sup>4</sup> This event and date in the reign of Harun al-Rashid may be taken as marking the topmost point ever reached by 'Abbasid power.

After 806 there was only one serious attempt at securing a footing beyond the Taurus, and that by al-Mu'tasim in 838. Though al-Mu'tasim's huge army, "equipped as no caliph's army before had ever been equipped",<sup>5</sup> penetrated into the heart

<sup>1</sup> Vasiliev, vol. i, p. 287.

<sup>2</sup> Niqfur of Arabic sources. He was of Arab origin; possibly a descendant of Jabalah the Ghassanid; Tabari, vol. iii, p. 695; Michel le Syrien, Chronicle, ed. J.-B. Chabot, vol. iii (Paris, 1905), p. 15. Irene, whom he dethroned, was the last of the Isaurian or Syrian dynasty

(717-802) founded by Leo III (717-41), who with his successors headed the iconoclastic movement which bears traces of Moslem influence. iheophanis, p. 405, calls Leo "the Saracen-minded".

<sup>3</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, p. 696.

<sup>4</sup> /bid. pp. 696, 709-10; Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 519, l. 14, p. 523, l. 2; Dinawari, pp. 356-7; Mas'udi. vol. ii, pp. 337-52.

<sup>6</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, p. 1236.

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of "the land of the Romans" and temporarily occupied Amorium (Amorion, Ar. 'Ammuriyah), the birthplace of the founder of the then ruling dynasty,<sup>1</sup> the attempt on the whole was unsuccessful. The Arab forces expected to march upon Constantinople but returned on the receipt of alarming reports of a military conspiracy at home. The reigning emperor, Theophilus (829-42), so feared the loss of his capital that he dispatched envoys to Venice, to the Frankish king and to the Umayyad court in Spain soliciting aid. Theophilus had once before been threatened from the east when al-Ma'mun, son of Harun, took the field in person but met his death (833) near Tarsus. After al-Mu'tasim no serious offensive on the Arab side was ever undertaken. Those of his successors who sent armies across the border aimed at plunder rather than conquest. In no case did the collision assume significance or occur deep in the land. Yet throughout the ninth century the hostile contacts, though of minor importance, occurred with almost annual regularity on the eastern border-line. One Arab geographer<sup>2</sup> informs us that it was the practice then to make three raids each year: one in winter covering the end of February and the

beginning of March, another in spring lasting thirty days from May 10, and a third in summer extending over a period of sixty days from July 10. Such raids served to keep the military forces in good trim and netted profitable spoils. But the original Arabian national motive, and to a large extent the religious impulse which figured in the early campaigns of Islam, had now become far less important factors. The internal weakening of the Moslem state was beginning to tell in its foreign relations. One of the petty dynasties, the Hamdanid in Aleppo, which arose about the middle of the tenth century at the expense of the caliphate, did take up the cudgels against Byzantium. But of that we shall hear later.

History and legend unite in placing the most brilliant period The glory of Baghdad during the caliphate of Harun al-Rashid (786-809). Baghdad Though less than half a century old, Baghdad had by that time grown from nothingness to a world centre of prodigious wealth and international significance, standing alone as the rival of Byzantium. Its splendour kept pace with the prosperity of the empire of which it was the capital. It was then

<sup>1</sup> Michel le Syrien, vol. iii, p. 7<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Qudamah, Kitab al-Ktiardj, ed. de Goeje (Leyden, 1889), p. 259-

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that Baghdad became “a city with no peer throughout the whole world”.<sup>1</sup>

The royal palace with its many annexes for harems, eunuchs and special functionaries occupied one-third of the Round City. Particularly impressive was its audience chamber with



its rugs, curtains and cushions, the best the Orient could produce, the caliph's cousin-wife, Zubaydah, who in tradition shares with her husband the halo of glory and distinction bestowed by later generations, would tolerate at her table no vessels not made of gold or silver and studded with gems. She set the fashion for the smart set and was the first to ornament her shoes with precious stones.<sup>2</sup> In one holy pilgrimage she is reported to have spent three million dinars, which included the expense of supplying Makkah with water from a spring twenty-five miles away.<sup>3</sup>

Zubaydah had a rival in the beautiful 'Ulayyah, daughter of al-Mahdi and half-sister of Harun, who to cover a blemish on her forehead devised a fillet set with jewels which, as the fillet à la 'Ulayyah, was soon adopted by the world of fashion as the ornament of the day.<sup>4</sup>

Especially on ceremonial occasions, such as the installation of the caliph, weddings, pilgrimages and receptions for foreign envoys, did the courtly wealth and magnificence find its fullest display. The marriage ceremony of the Caliph al-Ma'mun to the eighteen-year-old Buran,<sup>5</sup> daughter of his vizir, al-Hasan ibn-Sahl, was celebrated in 825 with such fabulous expenditure of money that it has lived in Arabic literature as one of the unforgettable extravaganzas of the age. At the nuptials a thousand pearls of unique size, we are told, were showered from a gold tray upon the couple who sat on a golden mat studded with pearls and sapphires. A two-hundred-rotl candle of ambergris turned the night into day. Balls of musk, each containing a ticket naming an estate or a slave or some such gift, were showered on the royal princes and dignitaries.<sup>6</sup> In 917 the Caliph al-Muqtadir received in his palace with great ceremony and pomp the envoys of the young Constantine VII, whose mission evidently

involved the exchange and ransom of prisoners.<sup>1</sup> The caliphal array included 160,000 cavalry and footmen, 7000 black and white eunuchs and 700 chamberlains. In the parade a hundred lions marched, and in the caliphal palace hung 38,000 curtains, of which 12,500 were gilded, besides 22,000 rugs. The envoys were so struck with awe and admiration that they first mistook the chamberlain's office and then the vizir's for the royal audience chamber. Especially impressed were they with the Hall of the Tree (dar al-shajaraji) which housed an artificial tree of gold and silver weighing 500,000 drams, in the branches of which were lodged birds of the same precious metals so constructed that they chirped by automatic devices. In the garden they marvelled at the artificially dwarfed palm trees which by skilled cultivation yielded dates of rare varieties.<sup>2</sup>

Like a magnet the princely munificence of Hârûn, the beau idéal of Islamic kingship, and of his immediate successors attracted to the capital poets, wits, musicians, singers, dancers, trainers of fighting dogs and- cocks and others who could amuse, interest or entertain.<sup>3</sup> Ibrâhîm al-Mawsili, Siyât and ibn-Jâmi\* led the roster of musician-singers. The libertine poet abu-Nuwâs, the boon companion of al-Rashid and his comrade on many a nocturnal adventure, has depicted for us in unforgettable terms the colourful court life of this period of glory. The pages of al\* Aghânî abound with illustrative anecdotes whose nucleus of truth is not hard to discern. According to one story the Caliph al-Amin (809-13) one evening bestowed on his uncle Ibrâhîm ibn-al-Mahdi, a professional singer, the sum of 300,000 dinars for chanting a few verses of abu-Nuwâs'. This raised the gratuities thus far received by Ibrâhîm from the caliph to 20,000,000 dirhams.<sup>4</sup> Al-Amin, of whom ibn-al-Athîr<sup>5</sup> found nothing praiseworthy to record, had a number of special barges shaped like animals built for

his parties on the Tigris. One of these vessels looked like a dolphin, another like a lion, a third like an eagle; the cost of one was 3,000,000 dirhams.<sup>6</sup> We read in the Aghani<sup>1</sup> of a picturesque all-night ballet conducted under the Caliph al-Amin's personal direction in which a large number of

<sup>1</sup> Mas'udi, Tanbih, p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> Khatib, vol. i, pp. 100-105; abu-al-l'ida', vol. ii, p. 73! Yaqut, vol. 11, pp. 520-21.

<sup>3</sup> Baladhuri, Ansab al-Ashraf, ed. Max Achlocssinger, vol. iv B (Jerusalem,

1938), p. I. \* Aghani, vol. ix, p. See below, p. 321. <sup>5</sup> Vol. vi, p. 207.

• Ibid. p. 206; Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 95<sup>1</sup>'3\* <sup>7 xvi' pp-</sup>  
'3^'9-beautiful girl dancers performed in rhythmic unison to the soft harmony of music and were joined in their singing by all those who attended. Al-Mas'üdi<sup>1</sup> relates that on the occasion of a dinner given by Ibrâhîm in honour of his brother al-Rashîd, the caliph was served with a dish of fish in which the slices looked exceedingly small. In explanation the host remarked that the slices were fishes' tongues, and the waiter added that the cost of the hundred and fifty tongues in the dish was over a thousand dirhams. Even when stripped of the adventitious glow cast by Oriental romance and fancy, enough of the splendour of court life in Baghdad remains to arouse our astonishment.

Next to the royal master in high and luxurious living came the members of the 'Abbâsid family, the vizirs, officials, functionaries and other satellites of the imperial household. Members of the Hâshimite tribe, to which the 'Abbâsids belonged, received large regular stipends from the state

treasury until the practice was discontinued by al-Mu'tasim (833-42)? Al-Rashid's mother, al-Khayzurân, is said to have had an income of 160,000,000 dirhams.<sup>3</sup> A certain Muhammad ibn-Sulaymân, whose property was confiscated on his death by al-Rashid, left 50,000,000 dirhams in cash and a daily income of 100,000 dirhams from his real estate.<sup>4</sup> The scale on which the Barmakids lived could not have been much lower than that of the caliphal household itself. As for the humdrum life of the ordinary citizen in Baghdad and the feelings that surged in the breast of the common man, we find little in the sources with the possible exception of the poetical works of the ascetic abu-al-'Atâhiyah.

When al-Ma'mûn in 819, after several years of civil war with his elder brother al-Amîn (who had been designated to the successorship by their father) and with his uncle Ibrâhîm ibn-al-Mahdi, who also claimed the throne, made his victorious entry into Baghdad a large part of the city lay in ruins. We hear no more of the Round City. As caliph, al-Ma'mûn took up his abode in the Ja'fari palace, originally built for Ja far al-Barmaki on the east side of the river. But it was not long before the town rose again to eminence as a commercial and intellectual centre. The natural successor to a long line of distinguished metropolitan towns which flourished in the Tigris-Euphrates valley beginning with

<sup>1</sup> Vol. vi, pp. 349-50.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Tha'âlibi, La{aif, p. 16.

<sup>1</sup> Mas'ûdi, vol. vi, p. 289.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Ur and Babylon and ending with Ctesiphon, the 'Abbasid capital could not be easily suppressed. Its advantageous position as a shipping centre made all parts of the then charted world accessible to it. Along its miles of wharves lay hundreds of vessels, including ships of war and pleasure craft and varying from Chinese junks to native rafts of

inflated sheepskins, not unlike those of our present day, which were floated down from al-Mawsil. Into the bazaars of the city came porcelain, silk and musk from China; spices, minerals and dyes from India and the Malay Archipelago; rubies, lapis lazuli, fabrics and slaves from the lands of the Turks in Central Asia; honey, wax, furs and white slaves from Scandinavia and Russia; ivory, gold dust and black slaves from eastern Africa. Chinese wares had a special bazaar devoted to their sale. The provinces of the empire itself sent by caravan or sea their domestic products: rice, grain and linen from Egypt; glass, metal ware and fruits from Syria; brocade, pearls and weapons from Arabia; silks, perfumes and vegetables from Persia.<sup>1</sup> Communication between the east and west sides of the city was assured by three main pontoon bridges like the Baghdad bridges of today. Al-Khatib<sup>2</sup> devotes a section of his history to the bridges of Baghdad and another to its canals (anhar). From Baghdad and other export centres Arab merchants shipped to the Far East, Europe and Africa fabrics, jewellery, metal mirrors, glass beads, spices, etc.<sup>3</sup> The hoards of Arab coins recently found in places as far north as Russia, Finland,<sup>4</sup> Sweden and Germany testify to the world-wide commercial activity of the Moslems of this and the later period. The adventures of Sindbad the Sailor, which form one of the best-known tales in The Thousand and One Nights, have long been recognized as based upon actual reports of voyages made by Moslem merchants.

Merchants played a leading part in the Baghdad community. Members of each craft and trade had their shops in the same market (suq)\* as in the present day. The monotony of street life was interrupted from time to time by the occasional passage of a wedding or circumcision procession. Professional men physicians, lawyers, teachers, writers and

the like began to occupy a conspicuous place under the patronage of al-Ma mun.

<sup>1</sup> Consult Le Strange, Eastern Caliphate, passim. See below, pp. 343> 35<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. i, pp. m-17.  
SC<sup>1</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See below> PP- 345

<sup>4</sup> The museum at Helsinki contains many such coins.

\* Ya'qubi, Bulddn, p. 246.

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By the time al-N adim composed (988) his monumental al-Fihrzst, a sort of catalogue of existing Arabic works, there were abundant manuscripts dealing even "with such subjects as hypnotism, jugglery, sword-swallowing and glass-chewing."<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khallikan<sup>2</sup> has fortunately left us a cross section of the daily routine of a member of the learned fraternity, Hunayn ibn-Ishaq, which indicates that scholarship had a considerable market value in those days. We arc first shown Hunayn, after his daily ride, at the public bath, where attendants poured water over him. On emerging he put on a lounging-robe, sipped a drink, ate a biscuit and lay down, sometimes falling asleep. The siesta over, he burned perfume to fumigate his person and ordered a dinner which generally consisted of soup, fattened chicken and bread. Then he resumed his sleep and on waking drank four rotis of old wine, to which he added quinces and Syrian apples if he felt the desire for fresh fruits.

intellect- The victory of Moslem arms under al-Mahdi and al-Rashid awakening over inveterate Byzantine enemy undoubtedly shed its lustre on this period, the luxurious

scale of living made this period popular in history and in fiction, but what has rendered this age especially illustrious in world annals is the fact that it witnessed the most momentous intellectual awakening in the history of Islam and one of the most significant in the whole history of thought and culture. The awakening was due in a large measure to foreign influences, partly Indo-Persian and Syrian but mainly Hellenic, and was marked by translations into Arabic from Persian, Sanskrit, Syriac and Greek. Starting with very little science, philosophy or literature of his own, the Arabian Moslem, who brought with him from the desert a keen sense of intellectual curiosity, a voracious appetite for learning and many latent faculties, soon became, as we have learned before, the beneficiary and heir of the older and more cultured peoples whom he conquered or encountered. As in Syria he adopted the already existing Aramaic civilization, itself influenced by the later Greek, so did he in al-Traq adopt the same civilization influenced by the Persian. In three-quarters of a century after the establishment of Baghdad the Arabic-reading world was in possession of the chief philosophical works of Aristotle, of the leading Neo-Platonic commentators, and of most of the medical writings of Galen, as well

<sup>1</sup> P. 312.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i, p. 29S.

as of Persian and Indian scientific works.<sup>7</sup> In only a few decades Arab scholars assimilated what had taken the Greeks centuries to develop. In absorbing the main features of both Hellenic and Persian cultures Islam, to be sure, lost most of its own original character, which breathed the spirit of the desert and bore the stamp of Arabian nationalism, but it thereby took an important place in the medieval cultural unit which linked southern Europe with the Near East. This culture, it should be remembered, was fed by a single stream, a stream with sources in ancient Egypt, Babylonia,

Phoenicia and Judaea, all flowing to Greece and now returning to the East in the form of Hellenism. We shall later see how this same stream was re-diverted into Europe by the Arabs in Spain and Sicily, whence it helped create the Renaissance of Europe.

India acted as an early source of inspiration, especially in India wisdom literature and mathematics. About A.H. 154 (771) an Indian traveller introduced into Baghdad a treatise on astronomy, a Siddhanta (Ar. Sindhind), which by order of al-Mansur was translated by Muhammad ibn-Ibrahlm al-Fazari (f between 796 and 806), who subsequently became the first astronomer in Islam.<sup>8</sup> The stars had of course interested the Arabians since desert days, but no scientific study of them was undertaken until this time. Islam added its impetus to the study of astronomy as a means for fixing the direction in which prayer should be conducted Ka'bahward. The famous al-Khwarizmi (f ca. 850) based his widely known astronomical tables {zlj} on al-Fazari's work and syncretized the Indian and Greek systems of astronomy, at the same time adding his own contribution. Among other translations of astronomical works at this period were those from Persian into Arabic by al-Fadl ibn-Nawbakht<sup>9</sup> (f ca. 815), the chief librarian of al-Rashld.<sup>10</sup>

This same Indian traveller had also brought a treatise on mathematics by means of which the numerals called in Europe

Arabic and by the Arabs Indian (Hindi) entered the Moslem world.<sup>1</sup> Later, in the ninth century, the Indians made another important contribution to Arabic mathematical science, the decimal system.

Persia



Except in the arts and belles-lettres Persia did not have much that was original to contribute. The esthetic temperament of its Iranian population was a sorely needed element in the cultural life of the Semitic Arabians. Next to the artistic, the literary—rather than the scientific or philosophical—was the influence most clearly felt from Persia. The earliest literary work in Arabic that has come down to us is *Kalilah wa-Dimnah* (fables of Bidpai), a translation from Pahlawi (Middle Persian) which was itself a rendition from Sanskrit. The original work was brought to Persia from India, together with the game of chess, in the reign of Anusharwan (531-78). What gives the Arabic version special significance is the fact that the Persian was lost, as was the Sanskrit original, though the material in an expanded form can still be found in the *Panchatantra*. The Arabic version therefore became the basis of all existing translations into some forty languages, including, besides European tongues, Hebrew, Turkish, Ethiopic and Malay. Even Icelandic has a translation. This book, intended to instruct princes in the laws of polity by means of animal fables, was done into Arabic by *ibn-al-Muqaffa'*,<sup>2</sup> a Zoroastrian convert to Islam whose suspect orthodoxy brought about his death by fire ca. 757.

*Ibn-al-Muqaffa'*'s translation was in itself a stylistic work of art, and ever since the 'Abbasid age Arabic prose has borne the impress of Persian style in its extravagant elegance, colourful imagery and flowery expression. The ancient Arabic style with its virile, pointed and terse form of expression was replaced to a large extent by the polished and affected diction of the Sasanid period. Such Arabic literary works as *al-Aghani*, *al-Iqd al-Farid* and *al-Turtushi's Sirdj al-Muliik*<sup>2</sup> teem with references to earlier Indo-Persian sources, especially when dealing with etiquette, wisdom,

polity and history. Arabic historiography, as we shall see, was modelled after Persian patterns.

<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. 573 seq.

<sup>1</sup> For printed editions of Kalilah xva-Dimnah see Sylvester de Sacy's (Paris, 1816), reprinted in Bulaq, 1249; Khalil al-Yaziji's 2nd ed. (Beirut, 1885); L. Cheikho's (Beirut, 1905). On ibn-al-Muqaffa' consult Fihrist, p. 118; ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, pp. 266-9. ' Published in Cairo, 1289, 1306, etc.

In 765 the Caliph al-Mansur, afflicted with a stomach disease which had baffled his physicians, summoned from Jundi-Shapur<sup>11</sup> the dean of its hospital, the Nestorian Jurjis<sup>12</sup> (George) ibn-Bakhtishu' (f ca. 771). Jundi-Shapur was noted for its academy of medicine and philosophy founded about 555 by the great Anusharwan. The science of the institution was based on the ancient Greek tradition, but the language of instruction was Aramaic. Jurjis soon won the confidence of the caliph and became the court physician, though he retained his Christian faith. Invited by the caliph to embrace Islam his retort was that he preferred the company of his fathers, be they in heaven or in hell.<sup>13</sup> Ibn-Bakhtishu' became in Baghdad the founder of a brilliant family which for six or seven generations, covering a period of two centuries and a half, with many ups and downs, exercised an almost continuous monopoly over the court medical practice. Scientific lore in those days, like jewellery-making and other forms of craftsmanship, was considered an exclusive family affair and transmitted from father to son. Jurjis' son Bakhtishu' (t 801) was chief physician of the Baghdad hospital under al-Rashid. Bakhtishu's son Jibril (Gabriel), who successfully treated a favourite slave of al-Rashid for hysterical paralysis by pretending to disrobe her

in public, was appointed the caliph's private physician in 805.<sup>[14](#) [15](#)</sup>

At the time of the Arab conquest of the Fertile Crescent the Hellenism intellectual legacy of Greece was unquestionably the most precious treasure at hand. Hellenism consequently became the most vital of all foreign influences in Arab life. Edessa (al-Ruha ), the principal centre of Christian Syrians; Harran, the headquarters of the heathen Syrians who in and after the ninth century claimed to be Sabians (Ar. Sabi'ah or Sabi'un);<sup>6</sup> Antioch, one of the many ancient Greek colonies; Alexandria, the meetingplace of Occidental and Oriental philosophy; and the numberless cloisters of Syria and Mesopotamia where not only ecclesiastical but scientific and philosophic studies were cultivated, all served as centres radiating Hellenistic stimuli. The various raids into "the land of the Romans", particularly under Harun, resulted in the introduction, among other objects of booty, of Greek manuscripts, chiefly from Amorium and Ancyra<sup>1</sup> (Ankara). AlMa' mun is credited with the dispatch of emissaries as far as Constantinople, to the Emperor Leo the Armenian himself, in quest of Greek works. Even al-Mansur is said to have received in response to his request from the Byzantine emperor a number of books, including Euclid.<sup>2</sup> But the Arabians knew no Greek and had at first to depend upon translations made by their subjects, Jewish, heathen and more particularly Nestorian Christian. These Syrian Nestorians, who translated first into Syriac and then from Syriac into Arabic, thus became the strongest link between Hellenism and Islam and consequently the earliest Oriental purveyors of Greek culture to the world at large. Before Hellenism could find access to the Arab mind it had to pass through a Syriac version.

The apogee of Greek influence was reached under al-Ma'mun. The rationalistic tendencies of this caliph and his

espousal of the Mu'tazilite cause, which maintained that religious texts should agree with the judgments of reason, led him to seek justification for his position in the philosophical works of the Greeks. The way the Fihrist\* expresses it is that Aristotle appeared to him in a dream and assured him that there was no real difference between reason and religious law. In pursuance of his policy al-Ma'mun in 830 established in Baghdad his famous Bayt al-Hikmah (house of wisdom), a combination library, academy and translation bureau which in many respects proved the most important educational institution since the foundation of the Alexandrian Museum in the first half of the third century B.C. Down to this time sporadic translation work had been done independently by Christians, Jews and recent converts to Islam. Beginning with al-Ma'mun and continuing under his immediate successors the work was centred mainly in the newly founded academy. The 'Abbasid era of translation lasted about a century after 750. Since most of the translators were Aramaic-speaking many of the Greek works were first done into Aramaic (Syriac)

<sup>1</sup> Ar. Anqirah; Ya'qubi, vol. i, p. 486.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-Khaldun, Muqaddamah, p. 401      <sup>3</sup> P. 243.

before their rendition into Arabic. In the case of many difficult passages in the original the translation was made word by word, and where no Arabic equivalent was found or known the Greek term was simply transliterated with some adaptation.<sup>1</sup>

The translators into Arabic did not interest themselves in Greek productions of the literary type. No close contact was therefore established between the Arab mind and Greek drama, Greek poetry and Greek history. In that field Persian influence remained paramount. Homer's Iliad was partially

translated into Syriac by Thàwafīl (Theophilus) ibn-Tuma of al-Ruha' (j\* 785),<sup>2</sup> the Maronite astrologer of al-Mahdi, but evidently it was not carried through the second step into Arabic as in other cases. It was first Greek medicine as represented by Galen (f ca. A.D. 200) and Paul of Aegina (fl. ca. A.D. 650),<sup>3</sup> Greek mathematics and allied sciences for which Euclid (fl. ca. 300 B.C.) and Ptolemy (fl. first half of second Christian century) stood, Greek philosophy as originated by Plato and Aristotle and expounded by later Neo-Platonists, that served as the startingpoint of this voyage of intellectual discovery.

One of the pioneer translators from Greek was abu-Yahya Tran\*-ibn-al-Batriq (f between 796 and 806), who is credited with<sup>lators</sup> having translated for al-Mansur the major works of Galen and Hippocrates (fl. ca. 436 B.C.) and for another patron Ptolemy's Quadripartitum? The Elements of Euclid and the Almagest, Arabic al-Majisti or al-Mijisti (originally from Gr. megistè, greatest), the great astronomical work of Ptolemy,<sup>5</sup> may have also been translated about the same time if a report in al-MasTidi<sup>6</sup> is correct. But evidently all these early translations were not properly done and had to be revised or remade under al-Rashid and al-Ma'mun. Another early translator was the Syrian Christian Yùhanna (Yahya) ibn-Màsayh<sup>7</sup> (f 857), a pupil of Jibril

<sup>1</sup> Hence such Arabic words as arithmàtiqi (arithmetic), jùmatriya (geometry). lighrafiyah (geography), mùstqi (music), falsafah (philosophy), asturlab (astrolabe), athir (ether), iksir (elixir), ibriz (pure gold), maghnatis (magnet), urghun (organ). Consult abu-'Abdullah al-Khwàrizmi, Mafàtih al-'Ulùm, ed. G. van Vloten (Leyden, 1895), index; Fihrist, passim; Rasa il Ikhwàn al-Safa , ed. Khayr-al-Din al-Zirikli (Cairo, 1928), passim.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-al-'Ibri, pp. 41, 220.

<sup>4</sup> Fihrist, p. 273.

<sup>6</sup> Ya'qübi, vol. i, pp. 150-51.

<sup>8</sup> Vol. viii, p. 291. Cf. below, pp. 314'15\*

<sup>7</sup> Latin Mesue (Mesua), or Mesue Major (the Elder) to distinguish him from Mesue the Younger (Masawayh al-Maridini), the Jacobite physician who flourished at the court of the Faḷimid Caliph al-Hakim in Cairo and died in 1015.

ibn-Bakhtishü' and a teacher of Hunayn ibn-Ishaq, who is said to have translated for al-Rashid certain manuscripts, mainly medical, which the caliph had brought back from Ancyra and Amorium.<sup>1</sup> Yühanna served also under the successors of al-Rashid. Once when offended by a court favourite his retort was, "If the folly wherewith thou art afflicted were converted into intelligence and divided amongst a hundred beetles, each would then become more intelligent than Aristotle!"<sup>2</sup>

Hunayn ibn-Ishaq

The sheikh of the translators, as the Arabs express it, was Hunayn ibn-Ishaq (Joannitius, 809-73), <sup>one</sup> of the greatest scholars and noblest characters of the age. Hunayn was an Tbádi, i.e. a Nestorian Christian from al-Hirah, and as a youth acted as dispenser to the physician ibn-Masawayh. Taking as a challenge a chiding remark by the master that the people of al-Hirah had no business with medicine and that he had better go and change money in the bazaar,<sup>3</sup> the lad left the service of ibn-Masawayh in tears, but intent upon the study of Greek. He was then sent by the three scholarly sons of Músa ibn-Shakir, who were carrying on independent

research work, into various Greek-speaking lands in quest of manuscripts, and later entered the service of Jibril ibn-Bakhtishü', physician-in-ordinary to al-Ma'rnun.

Subsequently this caliph appointed Hunayn superintendent of his library-academy, and in this capacity Hunayn had charge of al) the scientific translation work, in which he enjoyed the collaboration of his son Ishaq<sup>4</sup> and his nephew Hubaysh ibn-al-Hasan,<sup>5</sup> whom he trained. Of the numerous works ascribed to him some should undoubtedly be credited to these two assistants and to other students and members of his school, such as 'Isa ibn-Yahya<sup>6</sup> and Musa ibn-Khalid.<sup>7</sup> In many cases Hunayn evidently did the initial translation from Greek into Syriac and his colleagues took the second step and translated from Syriac into Arabic.<sup>8</sup> Aristotle's *Hermenéutica*, for instance, was first done from Greek into Syriac by the father

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-al-Tbri, p. 227; ibn-abi-Uṣaybi'ah, vol. i, pp. 175 seq. \ Qifti, p. 380.

<sup>2</sup> Fihrist, p. 295.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-al-'Ibri, p. 250; ibn-abi-Uṣaybi'ah, vol. i, p. 185.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. li6 = de Slane, vol. i, pp. 187-8.

<sup>6</sup> Nicknamed al-A'sam, because of a lame hand. Ibn-abi-Uṣaybi'ah, vol. i, pp. 187, 203, Fihrist, p. 297; ibn-al-'Ibn, p. 252.

<sup>6</sup> Fihrist, p. 297.

<sup>7</sup> He also translated from Persian into Arabic, *ibid.* p. 244. 1 28.

<sup>1</sup> Fihrist. p. 249

and then from Syriac into Arabic by the son Ishaq, who was the better Arabist<sup>16</sup> and who became the greatest translator of Aristotle's works. Among other books in Arabic Hunayn is supposed to have prepared translations of Galen, Hippocrates and Dioscorides (fl. ca. A.D. 50) as well as of Plato's Republic (Siyasahy<sup>17 18</sup> and Aristotle's Categories (Maqulat')\* Physics (Tabt IyaP) and Magna Mor alia (Khulqlyat'jP Among these his chief work was the rendition into Syriac and Arabic of almost all of Galen's scientific output.<sup>19</sup> Seven books of Galen's anatomy, lost in the original Greek, have luckily been preserved in Arabic.<sup>20</sup> Hunayn's Arabic version of the Old Testament from the Greek Septuagint<sup>21</sup> did not survive.

Hunayn's ability as a translator may be attested by the report that when in the service of the sons of ibn-Shakir he and other translators received about 500 dinars (about £ 2 50) per month and that al-Ma'mun paid him in gold the weight of the books he translated. But he reached the summit of his glory not only as a translator but as a practitioner when he was appointed by al-Mutawakkil (847-61) as his private physician. His patron, however, once committed him to jail for a year for refusing the offer of rich rewards to concoct a poison for an enemy. When brought again before the caliph and threatened with death his reply was, ' ' I have skill only in what is beneficial, and have studied naught else".<sup>22</sup> Asked by the caliph, who then claimed that he was simply testing his physician's integrity, as to what prevented him from preparing the deadly poison, Hunayn replied:

Two things: my religion and my profession. My religion decrees that we should do good even to our enemies, how much more to our friends. And my profession is instituted for



the benefit of humanity and limited to their relief and cure. Besides, every physician is under oath never to give anyone a deadly medicine.<sup>[23](#)</sup>

Hunayn ibn-Ishaq al-Tbadi was judged by ibn-al- Ibri and al-Qifti “a source of science and a mine of virtue”, and by

Leclerc “la plus grande figure du IX<sup>e</sup> siècle”, and even “une des plus belles intelligences et un des plus beaux caractères que l’on rencontre dans l’histoire”.<sup>[24](#)</sup>

Thâbit ibn-Qurrah

Just as Hunayn stood at the head of the Nestorian group of translators, so did Thâbit ibn-Qurrah<sup>[25](#)</sup> (ca. 836-901) lead another group, recruited from among the heathen Sâbians<sup>[26](#)</sup> of Harran (ancient Carrhae). These Sâbians were star-worshippers and as such had interested themselves in astronomy and mathematics from time immemorial. During the reign of al-Mutawakkil their native town became the seat of a school of philosophy and medicine which had been previously transferred from Alexandria to Antioch. In this milieu Thâbit and his disciples flourished. They are credited with having translated the bulk of the Greek mathematical and astronomical works, including those of Archimedes (f 212 B.C.) and of Apollonius of Perga (b. ca. 262 B.C.).<sup>[27](#)</sup> They also improved on earlier translations. The translation of Euclid by Hunayn, for example, was revised by Thâbit.<sup>[28](#)</sup> Thâbit found a patron in the Caliph al-Mu’tadid (892-902), whose personal friend and table companion he soon became.<sup>[29](#)</sup>

In his great work Thâbit was succeeded by his son Sinân (t 943), his two grandsons Thâbit (f 973)<sup>[30](#)</sup> and Ibrâhîm (f 946)<sup>®</sup> and one great-grandson, abu-al-Faraj,<sup>9</sup> all of whom distinguished themselves as translators and scientists. But

the greatest Sabian name after Thâbit's was that of al-Battâni (f 929, the Albategnius or Albatenus of Latin authors), whose first name, abu-'Abdullâh Muhammad (ibn-Jâbir ibn-Sinân), indicates his conversion to Islam. Al-Battâni's fame, however, rests on his original work as an astronomer, as he was not a translator.

The Harrânian school of mathematical and astronomical translators had as its forerunner al-Hajjâj ibn-Yûsuf ibn-Matar (fl. between 786 and 833), generally credited with making the first translation of Euclid's Elements and one of the first of Ptolemy's Almagest. Of the former work he evidently prepared two versions, one for al-Rashîd and the other for al-Ma'mûn,<sup>10</sup>

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before Hunayn prepared his. Al-Hajjaj's version of the notable astronomical work Almagest was made in 827—8 from an earlier Syriac version. The first attempt at the Almagest had been made as early as the days of Yahya ibn-Khalid ibn-Barmak,<sup>1</sup> al-Rashid's vizir, but the result was not satisfactory. A later adaptation of this work was undertaken by abu-al-Wafa\* Muhammad al-Buzjani al-Hasib<sup>2</sup> (940-97 or 99<sup>8</sup>), one of the greatest Moslem astronomers and mathematicians. Another late translator of mathematical and philosophical works was Qusta ibn-Luqa (f ca. 922), a Christian of Ba'labakk, whose list of original works in the FihrisF numbers thirty-four.

The latter part of the tenth century saw the rise of Jacobite, or Monophysite, translators represented by Yahya ibn-'Adi, who was born in Takrit in 893 and died in Baghdad in 974, and abu-'Ali 'Isa ibn-Zur'ah of Baghdad (f 1008).<sup>4</sup> Yahya, who became the archbishop of his church, declared once to the author of the FihrisF that he copied in a day and a night

an average of a hundred leaves. The Jacobite authors busied themselves with the revision of existing editions of Aristotelian works or the preparation of fresh translations thereof. They were, moreover, the chief influence in introducing Neo-Platonic speculations and mysticism into the Arabic world.

Before the age of translation was brought to an end practically all the extant works of Aristotle, many of which were of course spurious, had become accessible to the Arabic reader. Ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah,<sup>6</sup> and after him al-Qifti,<sup>7</sup> cite no less than a hundred works attributed to "the philosopher of the Greeks". All this took place while Europe was almost totally ignorant of Greek thought and science. For while al-Rashid and al-Ma'mun were delving into Greek and Persian philosophy their contemporaries in the West, Charlemagne and his lords, were reportedly dabbling in the art of writing their names. Aristotle's logical Organon, which in Arabic included Aristotle's Rhetoric and Poetics as well as Porphyry's Isagoge, soon took its place side by side with Arabic grammar as the basis of humanistic studies in Islam. This position it has maintained to the present day.

<sup>1</sup> Fihrist, pp. 267-8. Cf. above, p. 311.

<sup>2</sup> Buzjan in Quhistan was his birthplace; hasib means mathematician •

<sup>3</sup> P. 295. Cf. Qifti, pp. 262-3.

<sup>4</sup> Fihrist, p. 264; ibn-abi-Uṣaybi'ah, vol. 1, pp. 235-6; Qiiti, pp. 245-6.

' p. 264.

' Vol. i, pp. 57 se<F

<sup>1</sup> Pp- 34 W-

Moslems accepted the idea of Neo-Platonic commentators that the teachings of Aristotle and Plato (Aflâtün) were substantially the same. Especially in Sufism, Moslem mysticism, did the influence of Neo-Platonism manifest itself. Through Avicenna (ibn-Sîna) and Averroès (ibn-Rushd), as we shall later see, Platonism and Aristotelianism found their way into Latin and exercised a determining influence upon medieval European scholasticism.

This long and fruitful age of translation under the early 'Abbasids was followed by one of original contribution which we shall discuss in a later chapter. By the tenth century Arabic, which in pre-Islamic days was only a language of poetry and after Muhammad mainly a language of revelation and religion, had become metamorphosed in a remarkable and unprecedented way into a pliant medium for expressing scientific thought and conveying philosophic ideas of the highest order. In the meantime it had established itself as the language of diplomacy and polite intercourse from Central Asia, through the whole length of Northern Africa, to Spain. Ever since that time the peoples of al-Traq, Syria and Palestine as well as of Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco have expressed their best thought in the tongue of the Arabians.



British Museum

From H. II<sup>7</sup>. C. Davis, "Medieval England" (Clarendon Press)

ANGLO-SAXON GOLD COIN IMITATING AN ARAB DINAR

OF THE YEAR 774

It bears on the obverse the shahadah and on the reverse offa rex inscribed upside down

CHAPTER XXV

THE 'ABBÂSID STATE

At the head of the state stood the caliph, who was, in theory at the least, the fountainhead of all power. He could and did delegate the exercise of his civil authority to a vizir (wazir), of his judicial power to a judge (qâdi), of his military function to a general (amir), but the caliph himself ever remained the final arbiter of all governmental affairs. In their imperial conduct and function the early caliphs of Baghdad followed the older Persian pattern. Taking advantage of the popular reaction against the ungodliness of the later Umayyads, the 'Abbâsids made their début with emphasis on the religious character and dignity of their office as an imamate, an emphasis which in later years increased in inverse proportion to their actual power. With the eighth caliph, al-Mu'tasim bi-Allah (833-42), and continuing till the end of the dynasty, they began to assume honorific titles compounded with Allah. In the period of decline their subjects started to shower on them such extravagant titles as khalifat Allah (God's caliph) and later zill Allah 'ala al-ard (God's shadow on earth). These were evidently first bestowed on al-Mutawakkil (847-61),<sup>31</sup> and persisted until the last days of the Ottoman caliphate.

The ill-defined hereditary principle of succession instituted by the Umayyad caliphs was followed throughout the Abbâsid régime with the same evil results. The reigning caliph would designate as his successor that one of his sons whom he favoured or considered competent, or any of his kinsmen whom he regarded as best qualified. Al-Saffâh nominated his brother al-Mansur, who was succeeded by his son al-Mahdi.<sup>32</sup> Al-Mahdi was succeeded by his eldest son, al-Hadi, who was followed by his brother Hârûn al-Rashîd.<sup>33</sup> Hârûn designated his oldest son, al-Amin, as his first successor, and his younger but more talented son, al-Ma'mûn, as his second successor. He divided the empire between the two, reserving for al-Ma'mûn the government of Khurasan with Marw (Marv) for his capital.<sup>1</sup> After a bitter struggle which ended in the assassination of al-Amîn (September 813), al-Ma'mûn usurped the caliphate. Four years later, when he donned the green of the Shî'ah in preference to the black of the 'Abbâsids and designated an 'Alid, 'Ali al-Rida, as heir apparent, the enraged Baghdadis elected (July 817) al-Ma'mûn's uncle Ibrâhîm ibn-al-Mahdi as caliph. Not until 819, six years after the death of his predecessor, did al-Ma'mûn succeed in effecting an entry into the capital of the empire. Shortly before his death al-Ma'mûn, ignoring his son al-'Abbas, designated his brother al-Mu'tasim as his successor, thus almost precipitating a revolt on the part of the army, with whom the son was a special favourite. Al-Mu'tasim was followed by his son al-Wathîq (t 847), with whom the period of 'Abbasid glory ended. Of the first twenty-four caliphs, whose reign covered almost two centuries and a half (750-991), only six were immediately succeeded by a son.

Attached to the person of the caliph was the chamberlain (hajib\ whose duty consisted in introducing accredited envoys and dignitaries into the caliphal presence and whose

influence naturally became great. There was also the executioner, an outstanding figure in the Baghdad court. Vaulted underground chambers used for torture appear for the first time in Arab history. The court astrologer, like the executioner an importation from Persia, became an adjunct of the 'Abbâsid throne.

## Vizir

Next to the caliph stood the vizir (wazir), whose office was influenced by the Persian tradition.<sup>2</sup> The vizir acted as the caliph's alter ego and grew in power as his chief indulged increasingly in the pleasures of the harem. In the diploma appointing his vizir the Caliph al-Nasir (1180-1225) has given a perfect expression to the theory of "divine right" of kingship working by proxy:

Muhammad ibn-Barz al-Qummi is our representative throughout the land and amongst our subjects. Therefore he who obeys him obeys us; and he who obeys us obeys God, and God shall cause him who obeys Him to enter Paradise. As for one who, on the other hand,

<sup>1</sup> Ya'qûbi, vol. ii, pp. 500 seq.\ Fakhri, p. 292; Mas'ûdi, Tanbih, p. 345.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. ibn-al-'Abbas, *Athcir al-Uwalfi Tartib al-Duwal* (Cairo, 1295), p. 62, S. D. Goitein in *Islamic Culture*, vol. xvi (1942), pp. 255-63, 380-92.

disobeys our vizir, he disobeys us; and he who disobeys us disobeys God, and God shall cause him who disobeys Him to enter hell-fire.<sup>34</sup>

As in the case of the Barmakids the vizir was often allpowerful, appointing and deposing governors and judges,



theoretically, of course, with the consent of the caliph, and even transmitting his own office according to the hereditary principle. It was customary for the vizir to confiscate the property of the governor who fell from grace, as it was customary for the governor himself to appropriate the estates of inferior officials and private citizens and for the caliph in his turn to mete out the same penalty to the deposed vizir.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, the forfeiture of possessions was often accompanied by loss of life. Finally a special "bureau of confiscation"<sup>36</sup> was instituted as a regular governmental department. In the days of the Caliph al-Mu'tadid the vizir received a monthly salary of a thousand dinars. Al-Mawardi<sup>37</sup> and other legal theorists distinguish between two varieties of vizirate: a tafwid (with full authority, unlimited) and a tanfidh (with executive power only, limited). The unlimited vizir exercised all the powers of sovereignty with the exception of the appointment of his successor; the limited vizir took no initiative but confined his duties to the execution of the caliph's orders and the following of his instructions. After the Time of al-Muqtadir (908-32) the vizir was supplanted by the amir al-umara, commander of the commanders, an office which was subsequently held by the Buwayhids.

The vizir, in reality grand vizir, presided over the council, Bureau whose membership included the various heads of the depart- of taxes ments of state. Sometimes those heads were also designated vizirs, but their rank was always subordinate to that of the real vizir. Under the 'Abbasids the governmental machinery became much more complicated than heretofore, though greater order was brought into state affairs, especially in the system of taxation and the administration of justice. Since finances constituted the main concern of the government the bureau of taxes {diwan al-kharaf), or department of finance (bayt al-mal\

remained, as under the Umayyads, the most important unit; its chief, often referred to as “master of taxes”, continued to be an outstanding figure in the government of the caliph.

The sources of revenue for the state included zakâh, the only legal tax obligatory on every Moslem. Zakâh was imposed on arable lands, herds, gold and silver, commercial wares and other forms of property capable of augmentation through natural increase or by investment. Moslems, as we learned before, paid no poll tax. The official tax-gatherer looked after lands, herds and the like, but personal effects, including gold and silver, were left to the individual’s private conscience. All money collected from believers was disbursed from the central treasury for the benefit of believers: the poor, the orphan, the stranger, volunteers for the holy war and slaves and captives to be ransomed. The other main sources of public income were tribute from foreign enemies, truce money, capitation tax from non-Moslem subjects (Jizyâiïf land tax (kharâff and tithes levied upon merchandise owned by non-Moslems and imported into Moslem territory. Of these items the land tax was always the largest and constituted the main source of income from unbelievers. All this revenue was at this time referred to as fay (cf. Koran 59 : 7) and applied by the caliph to the payment of the troops, the maintenance of mosques, roads and bridges and for the general good of the Moslem community.<sup>2</sup>

The varying reports of the state revenue that have come down to us from the 'Abbâsid period testify to great prosperity during the first century of the regime, which made it possible for the caliphs to live on the grand scale described above, and to a steady decline in revenue during each succeeding century. Three such reports have been preserved for us: the oldest, in ibn-Khaldûn, showing the income under al-Ma’mûn; the second, in Qudâmah, for the

revenue a few years later, possibly under al-Mu tasim; and the third, in ibn-Khurdâdhbih, indicating the proceeds in the first half of the third Moslem century. According to ibn-Khaldûn<sup>3</sup> the

<sup>1</sup> By this time the differentiation between jizyah and kharâj had been clearly made. See above, p. 171. In later times the jizyah corresponded to al-badal al'askari (scutage), which the Ottomans exacted from their non-Moslem subjects for exemption from military service.

<sup>1</sup> Mâwardi, pp. 366 seq.

<sup>1</sup> Muqaddamahy pp. 150-51\* Cf. Huart, Histoire des Arabes, vol. i, p. 37 ^J Alfred von Kremer, Culturgeschichte des Orients unter den Chalifen, vol. i (Vienna, 1875), pp. 356 seq. It is obvious that ibn-Khaldûn's list, like the other two, is neither clear nor accurate.

annual land tax paid by al-Sawad (lower'Iraq, ancient Babylonia) in cash, other than what was paid in kind, amounted in the days of al-Ma'mun to 27,800,000 dirhams; by Khurasan, 28,000,000; by Egypt, 23,040,000; by Syria-Palestine,<sup>1</sup> 14,724,000; and by all the provinces of the empire, 331,929,008 dirhams exclusive of taxes in kind. From Qudamah's <sup>2</sup> balance-sheet it may be gathered that the income in both cash and kind from al-Sawad was equivalent to 130,200,000 dirhams;<sup>3</sup> from Khurasan, 37,000,000; from Egypt, including Alexandria, 37,500,000; from Syria-Palestine, including Hirs, 15,860,000; and from the whole empire, 388,291,350 dirhams, which includes taxes in kind. Ibn-Khurdadhbih<sup>4</sup> lists a number of items from which we may calculate that the tax of al-Sawad in cash and kind was the equivalent of 78,319,340 dirhams; <sup>5</sup>> of Khurasan and dependencies,

44,846,000; of Syria-Palestine,<sup>6</sup> 29,850,000; and of the whole empire, 299,265,340.' As for the expenditures, we have no sufficient data in the scattered references to warrant definite conclusions. But we are told that when al-Mansur died the central treasury contained 600,000,000 dirhams and 14,000,000 dinars;<sup>8</sup> when al-Rashid died it had over 900,000,000,<sup>9</sup> and at the death of al-Muktafi (908) the public treasures including jewellery, furniture and real estate amounted to 100,000,000 dinars.<sup>10</sup>

Besides the bureau of taxes the 'Abbasid government had an Other audit or accounts office {diwan al-zimam} introduced by al-Mahdi; a board of correspondence or chancery office {diwan bureaux al-tawqt'} which handled all official letters, political documents and imperial mandates and diplomas; a board for the inspection of grievances; a police department and a postal department.

The board for the inspection of grievances {diwan al-nazar fi al-mazalim} was a kind of court of appeal or supreme court intended to set aright cases of miscarriage of justice in the

<sup>1</sup> Qinnasrin, Damascus, the Jordan and Palestine, the taxes of which are given as 1,227,000 dinars.

<sup>2</sup> Kharaj, pp. 237-52.

<sup>5</sup> In cash alone 8,095,800 dirhams; Qudamah, pp. 249, 239. As a matter of fact he gives different figures in different places and on his lists the totals do not tally with the itemized statements.

<sup>4</sup> Passim.

<sup>5</sup> In cash alone about 8,456,840 dirhams; ibn-Khurdadhbih, pp. 5 seq.

- Qinnasrin and other frontier towns, Ilims, Damascus, the Jordan and Palestine.

<sup>7</sup> Zaydan, Tamaddun, vol. ii, p. 61. Cf. Huart, vol. i, p. 37<sup>^</sup>-

<sup>8</sup> Mas'udi, vol. vi, p. 233.

» Tabari, vol. iii, p. 764.  
p. 72.

<sup>10</sup> Tha alibi, Lafa'if,

administrative and political departments. Its origin goes back to the Umayyad days, for al-Mâwardi<sup>1</sup> tells us that 'Abd-al-Malik was the first caliph to devote a special day for the direct hearing by himself of appeals and complaints made by his subjects. 'Umar II zealously followed the precedent.<sup>2</sup> This practice was evidently introduced by al-Mahdi into the 'Abbâsid regime. His successors al-Hâdi, Hârûn, al-Ma'mûn and those who followed received such complaints in public audience; al-Muhtadi (869-70) was the last to keep up the custom. The Norman king Roger II (1130-54) introduced this institution into Sicily, where it struck root in European soil.<sup>3</sup>

The police department (diwan al-shurtalz) was headed by a high official designated sahib al-shurtah, who acted as chief of police and the royal bodyguard and in later times occasionally held the rank of vizir. Each large city had its own special police who also held military rank and were as a rule well paid. The chief of municipal police was called muhtasib, for he acted as overseer of markets and morals. It was his duty to see that proper weights and measures were used in trade, that legitimate debts were paid (though he

had no judicial power), that approved morals were maintained and that acts forbidden by law, such as gambling, usury and public sale of wine, were not committed. Al-Mâwardi<sup>4</sup> enumerates, among other interesting duties of this prefect of police, the maintenance of the recognized standards of public morality between the two sexes and the chastisement of those who dyed their grey beards black with a view to gaining the favour of the ladies.

A significant feature of the 'Abbâsid government was the postal department,<sup>5</sup> of which the chief was called sahib al-barid. Among the Umayyads Mu'âwiyah, as we have already learned, was the first to interest himself in the postal service, 'Abd-al-Malik extended it throughout the empire and al-Walid made use of it for his building operations. Historians credit Hârûn with

<sup>1</sup> P. 131. Cf. ibn-al-Athir, vol. i, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Mâwardi, p. 131. Cf. Ya'qûbi, vol. ii, p. 367. Consult al-Bayhaqi, al-Mahâsin

w-al-Masawi' , ed. F. Schwally (Giessen, 1902), pp. 525 seq.

<sup>3</sup> M. Amari, Storia dei Musulmani di Sicilia, ed. Nallino, vol. iii (Catania, 1937-9), p. 452; von Kremer, Culturgeschichte, vol. i, p. 420.

<sup>4</sup> Pp. 417-18, 431.

<sup>6</sup> Diwan al-barid, bureau of post. Ar. barid is probably a Semitic word, not related to Latin veredus, Pers, birdan, a swift horse, Ar. birdhawn, horse of burden. Cf. Esth. 8 : 10; Içfahâni, Ta'rîkh, p. 39.

having organized the service on a new basis through his Bar-makid counsellor Yahya. Though primarily designed to serve the interests of the state, the postal institution did in a limited way handle private correspondence.<sup>1</sup> Each provincial capital was provided with a post office. Routes connected the imperial capital with the leading centres of the empire<sup>2</sup> and systems of relays covered these routes. In all there must have been hundreds of such relay routes. In Persia the relays consisted of mules and horses; in Syria and Arabia camels were used.<sup>3</sup> The barld was also employed for the conveyance of newly appointed governors to their respective provinces and for the transportation of troops with their baggage.<sup>4</sup> The public could make use of it on the payment of a substantial sum.

Pigeons were trained and used as letter-carriers. The first recorded instance relates to the news of the capture of the rebel Babik (Babak), chief of the Khurrami<sup>5</sup> sect, carried to al-Mu'tasim by this method in 837.<sup>6</sup>

The postal headquarters in Baghdad had itineraries of the whole empire indicating the various stations and the intervening distances. These itineraries assisted travellers, merchants and pilgrims and laid the basis of later geographical research. Early Arab students of geography made use of such postal directories in the composition of their works. One of the leaders among them, ibn-Khurdadhbih (f ca. 912), whose *al-Masalik w-al-Mamalik*, based on material in the state archives, proved an important source for historical topography, was himself sahib al-barld for the Caliph al-Mu'tamid in al-Jibal (ancient Media). This elaborate road system which radiated from the imperial capital was an inheritance from the earlier Persian empire. In it the most famous of the trunk roads was the Khurasan highway, which stretched north-east through

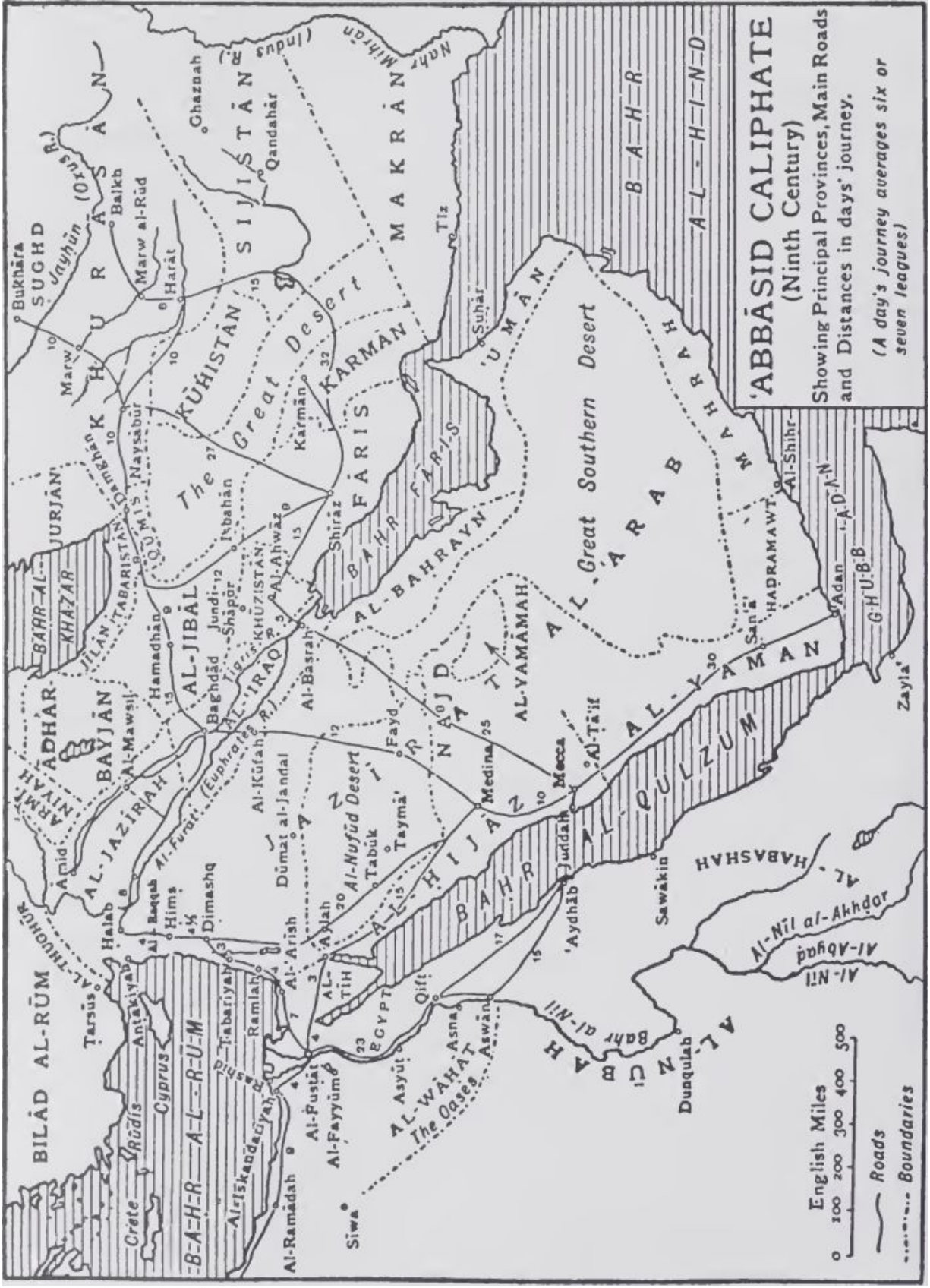
Hamadhan, al-Rayy, Naysa-bur, Tus, Marw, Bukhara, Samarqand, and connected Baghdad with the frontier towns of the Jaxartes and the borders of China. From the principal cities along this highway cross-roads branched off north and south. To the present day the Persian post roads <sup>1</sup> Mas'udi, vol. vi, p. 93, 11. 5-6. <sup>2</sup> Ibn-Khurdadhbih, passim.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi, p. 49, 11. 11-12. <sup>4</sup> Ibtd. vol. iv, pp. 373'4

<sup>6</sup> So called from a district in Persia where the sect evidently arose as a result of the execution of the famous abu-Muslim al-Khurasani. Some of them denied that abu-Muslim was dead and foretold his return to spread justice in the world. Mas'udi, vol. vi, p. 186; Baghdadi, ed. Hitti, pp. 162 seq.\ Fihrist, p. 342.

- Mas'udi, vol. vii, pp. 126-7.





centring in Tihran (Teheran), near ancient al-Rayy, follow the same old tracks. Another main road led from Baghdad down the Tigris through Wasit and al-Basrah to al-Ahwaz in Khuzistan and thence to Shiraz in Faris. Likewise this road sent off east and west branches which connected its towns with other centres of population and ultimately with the Khurasan trunk. These roads were frequented by pilgrims, who from Baghdad could take the pilgrim route to Makkah through al-Kufah or al-Basrah. For the benefit of pilgrims and travellers caravanserais, hospices and cisterns dotted the main roads. Such khans along the Khurasan road were built as early as the days of 'Umar II.<sup>1</sup> A third highway linked Baghdad with al-Mawsil, Amid (Diyar Bakr) and the frontier fortresses. On the north-west Baghdad was connected with Damascus and other Syrian towns through al-Anbar and al-Raqqah.

The postmaster-general had another important function besides looking after the imperial mail and supervising the various postal establishments; he was the chief of an espionage system to which the whole postal service was subordinated. As such his full title was sahib al-barid w-al-akhbar,<sup>2</sup> controller of the post and intelligence service. In this capacity he acted as an inspector-general and direct confidential agent of the central government. The provincial postmaster reported to him or to the caliph directly on the conduct and activities of the government officials in his province, not excluding the governor himself. Such a report, submitted to al-Mutawakkil against a governor of Baghdad who brought back with him from a pilgrimage to Makkah a beautiful slave girl "with whom he amuses himself from noon till night to the neglect of the affairs of the state", has come down to us in a late source.<sup>3</sup> Al-Mansur employed in his espionage system merchants, pedlars and travellers who acted as detectives; al-Rashid and other caliphs did the

same.<sup>4</sup> Al-Ma'mun is said to have had in his intelligence service in Baghdad some 1700 aged women. Especially was "the land of the Romans" covered with 'Abbasid spies of both sexes disguised as traders, travellers and physicians.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. v, p. 44; Nawawi, Tahdhib, p. 468,1. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Qudamah, p. 184.

\* Atlidi. Flam al-Nas (Cairo, 1297), p. 161.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Aghani, vol. xv, p. 36,1. 14; Miskawayh, ed. de Goeje and de Jong, pp. 234, 466, 498, 512, 514, 567.

### Judicial administration

The dispensing of justice, always considered in Moslem communities a religious duty, was entrusted by the 'Abbâsid caliph or his vizir to a member of X\\efaqh (theologian) class, who thus became a qâdi<sup>^</sup> or if in Baghdad a qâdi al-qudâh (chief judge). The first to receive the title of qâdi al-qudâh was the famous abu-Yûsuf (f ca. 798), who served under al-Mahdi and his two sons al-Hâdi and Hârûn.<sup>2</sup> The judge, according to the theory of Moslem law, had to be male, adult, in full possession of his mental faculties, a free citizen, Moslem in faith, irreproachable in character, sound of sight and hearing and well versed in the prescriptions of law,<sup>3</sup> all of which was of course canon law. NonMoslems, as noted before, were in matters of civil right under the jurisdiction of their own ecclesiastical heads or magistrates. Al-Mâwardi <sup>4</sup> distinguishes between two types of judgeship: one in which the authority is general and absolute Çâmmah mutlaqali) and the other in which the authority is special and limited (khâssalt). The chief duties of the qâdi of the first class consisted in deciding cases,

acting as guardian for orphans, lunatics and minors, administering pious foundations, imposing punishments on violators of the religious law, appointing judicial deputies (sing, naib) in the various provinces and presiding under certain conditions at the Friday congregational prayers. In the early history of the institution the provincial judges held their appointment from the governors, but in the fourth Moslem century those judges were usually deputies of the chief qâdi in Baghdâd. Under al-Ma'mûn the pay of the judge of Egypt is said by a late authority <sup>5</sup> to have reached 4000 dirhams a month. The judge of the second class, one with special and limited authority, had his power restricted in accordance with the diploma of appointment from the caliph, vizir or governor.<sup>6</sup>

### Military organization

The Arab caliphate never maintained a large standing army in the strict sense of the term, well organized, under strict discipline and subject to regular instruction and drill. The caliphal bodyguard (haras) were almost the only regular troops and formed the nucleus around which clustered bands under

<sup>1</sup> Transliterated in at least thirteen different ways, six of which occur in official British documents: qadi, qazi, kazi, cadi, al-kali, kathi.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-Khallikân, vol. iii, p. 334 = de Slane, vol. iv, p. 273.

<sup>8</sup> Mâwardi, pp. 107-11.

<sup>4</sup> Pp. 117-25-

<sup>6</sup> Suyûti, Husn, vol. ii, p. 100, 1. 4.

<sup>e</sup> Consult Richard Gottheil in *Revue des études ethnographiques* (1908), pp. 385-93-

327 their own chiefs, besides mercenaries and adventurers, and general levies of which the units were tribes or districts. The regulars (jund} who were permanently on active service were referred to as murtaz'iqah (regularly paid), for they were in the pay of the government. Others were designated mutatawwi ah<sup>x</sup> (volunteers) and received rations only while on duty. The volunteer ranks were recruited from among the Bedouins as well as from the peasants and townspeople. Members of the bodyguard received higher pay and were equipped with better armour and uniforms. In the reign of the first Abbasid caliph the average pay of the foot soldier was, besides the usual rations and allowances, about 960 dirhams a year,<sup>38 39</sup> the horseman receiving double that amount. Under al-Ma'mun, when the empire reached its height, the Iraq army is said to have numbered 125,000, of whom the infantry received only 240 dirhams a year<sup>40 41 42</sup> and the cavalry twice as much. And when it is remembered that al-Mansur paid his master builder at the founding of Baghdad the equivalent of about a dirham a day and the ordinary labourer about a third of a dirnam,<sup>^</sup> it becomes clear how comparatively well paid the military career was.

The regulars under the early 'Abbasids were composed of infantry (harbiyaW)<sup>^</sup> armed with spears, swords and shields, of archers (rtimiyah} and of cavalry (fursan} wearing helmets and breast-plates and equipped with long lances and battle-axes. Al-Mutawakkil introduced the practice of wearing the sword in the Persian fashion round the waist in preference to the old Arabian way of carrying it over the shoulder.<sup>43</sup> Each corps of archers had attached to it a body of naphtha-throwers (naffdtun) who wore fireproof suits and hurled incendiary material at the enemy.<sup>44</sup> Engineers in charge of the siege machinery, including catapults, mangonels and battering-rams, accompanied the army. One such engineer, ibn-Sabir al-Manjaniqi, who flourished later

under al-Nasir (1180-1225), left an unfinished book which treats of the art of warfare in all its details.<sup>1</sup> Field hospitals and ambulances in the shape of litters carried by camels accompanied the army when in the field. As usual, Hârûn is the caliph credited with introducing these features and pressing science into the service of warfare.

During the 'Abbasid regime, which, as we have seen before, owed its rise to Persian rather than Arab arms, the Arabian element lost its military, as it did its political, predominance. Under the first caliphs the bodyguard, the strong arm of the military machine, was largely composed of Khurâsâni troops. The Arab soldiery formed two divisions: one of North Arabians, Mudarite, and the other of South Arabians, Yamanite. New converts to Islam attached themselves to some Arabian tribe as clients and thus formed a part of the military organization of that tribe. Al-Mu\*tasim added a new division made up of Turks, originally his slaves, from Farghânah and other regions of Central Asia.<sup>2</sup> This new imperial bodyguard soon became the terror of the whole capital, and in 836 the caliph had to build a new town, Sâmarra, to which he transferred his seat of government. After the death of al-Muntasir (861-2) these Turks began to play the part of a praetorian guard and exercise a determining influence on affairs of the state.

In Roman-Byzantine fashion every ten men of the army under al-Ma'mûn, al-Musta'in and other 'Abbâsid caliphs were commanded by an 'arif (corresponding to the decurion), every fifty by a khalifah, and every hundred by a qaid (corresponding to the centurion).<sup>3</sup> At the head of a corps of 10,000, comprising ten battalions, stood the amir (general). A body of a hundred men formed a company or squadron and several such companies constituted a cohort (kurdûs). Von Kremer<sup>4</sup> has reconstructed for us a realistic picture of an Arab army of those days on the march.

Throughout its first century the 'Abbasid caliphate depended for its very existence on a strong and contented soldiery, which was used not only for suppressing revolts in Syria, Persia and

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khallikân, vol. iii, p. 397.  
p. 118.

<sup>1</sup> Mas'ûdi, vol. vii,

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-Khaldûn, vol. iii, p. 299, 1. 7. Cf. Mas'ûdi, vol. vi, p. 452; Tabari, vol. iii, p. 1799.

<sup>4</sup> Culturgeschichte, vol. i, pp. 227-9 =»S. Khuda Bukhsh, The Orient under the Caliphs (Calcutta 1920), pp. 333-5.

Central Asia but for waging aggressive war against the Byzantines. "Two things", in the opinion of a modern scholar,<sup>45</sup> "rendered the Saracens of the tenth century dangerous foes,— their numbers and their extraordinary powers of locomotion." But that was not all. In the treatise on military tactics attributed to the Emperor Leo VI the Wise<sup>46</sup> (886-912) we are told: "Of all the [barbarous] nations they [the Saracens] are the best advised and most prudent in their military operations". The following passage from the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus<sup>47</sup> (913-59) describes the impression left by the Arabs on their Byzantine foes: "They are powerful and warlike, so that if only a thousand of them occupy a camp it is impossible to dislodge them. They do not ride horses but camels." From statements in these and other Byzantine sources such as the work on military tactics composed by the Emperor Nicephorus Phocas (963-9) it is evident that cold and rainy weather was distasteful to the Arab warriors, that once their line was broken in action they usually lacked the necessary discipline to restore it and that their foot was in general a mere rabble of plunderers ineffective as a fighting machine. Yet it is evident that the Byzantines looked upon the Arabs, whom

they called infidels and barbarous, as their most formidable enemy. In the course of the tenth century, however, this enemy grew less and less dangerous until by its end the Byzantines were habitually taking the offensive and threatening even Damascus and Baghdad.

The decline of the 'Abbásid military power began with the introduction by al-Mutawakkil of the foreign units, which contributed to the destruction of the necessary conditions for the upkeep of the morale and esprit de corps. Later on al-Muqtadir (908-32) initiated the policy of farming out provinces to governors or military commanders who were to pay their troops from local state funds and not from the depleted imperial treasury. Under the Buwayhid regime soldiers received grants in the form of lands instead of pay in cash. This sowed the seeds of a feudal military system which was further developed under the Saljüqs. It then became customary for governors and generals to receive as grants towns or districts over which they ruled with absolute power, paying the Saljuq sultan a yearly tribute and, in time of war, marching under his banner with a fixed number of troops equipped and supported by themselves.

I'll be governor

The Umayyad partition of the empire into provinces under governors (sing, amir or        a division based on earlier

Byzantine and Persian models, was not radically changed under the 'Abbasids. The 'Abbasid list of provinces varied from time to time and the political classification may not always have tallied with the geographical as preserved in al-Istakhri, ibn-Hawqal, ibn-al-Faqih and similar works; but the following seem to have been the chief provinces under the early caliphs of Baghdad: (i) Africa west of the Libyan Desert together with Sicily; (2) Egypt; (3) Syria and Palestine,



which were sometimes separated; (4) al-Hijaz and al-Yamamah (Central Arabia); (5) al-Yaman or Southern Arabia;<sup>1</sup> (6) al-Bahrayn and 'Uman, with al-Basrah in al-Traq for its capital; (7) al-Sawad, or al-Traq (Lower Mesopotamia), whose leading cities after Baghdad were al-Kufah and Wasit; (8) al-Jazirah (i.e. the island, rather the peninsula, ancient Assyria), whose capital was al-Mawsil (Mosul); (9) Adharbayjan, of which Ardabil, Tibriz and Maraghah were the leading towns; (10) al-Jibal (the mountains, ancient Media), later called al-Traq al-\*Ajami (the Persian Traq),<sup>2</sup> of which the principal cities were Hamadhan (ancient Ecbatana), al-Rayy and Isbahan (Isfahan, Ispahan); (11) Khuzi-stan, with al-Ahwaz and Tustar<sup>3</sup> as chief towns; (12) Faris, of which Shiraz was the capital; (13) Karman, whose present capital bears the same name; (14) Mukran, which included modern Baluchistan and extended to the highlands overlooking the Indus valley; (15) Sijistan or Sistan, whose capital was Zaranj; (16-20) Quhistan, Qumis, Tabaristan, Jurjan and Armenia; (21) Khurasan, which included what has now become the north-western part of Afghanistan and whose leading cities were Naysabur, Marw, Harat (Herat) and Balkh; (22) Khwarizm, whose early capital was Kath; (23) al-Sughd (ancient Sogdiana) between the Oxus and Jaxartes, having two famous cities, Bukhara and Samarqand; (24, etc.) Farghanah, al-Shash

<sup>1</sup> These five provinces were often referred to as aqalim al-maghrib, the occidental provinces, in contradistinction to the rest referred to as aqalim al-mashriq^ the oriental provinces.

' In contrast to al-Traq al-\*Arabi (the Arabian Traq). i e. Lower Mesopotamia.

<sup>1</sup> Called Shustar or Shushtar by the Persians.

(modern Tashkand) and other Turkish lands.<sup>1</sup> The Ottoman Turkish vilayets in Western Asia, it may be noticed, correspond geographically to the old Arab provinces.

In spite of all efforts on the part of the imperial capital, decentralization was the unavoidable consequence of such a far-flung domain with difficult means of intercommunication. In all local affairs the governor's authority tended to become supreme and his office hereditary. In theory he held his position during the pleasure of the vizir, who recommended his appointment to the caliph, and went out of office when that vizir was removed. As in the case of the vizirate al-Mawardi<sup>2</sup> distinguishes between two varieties of governorship: one, imarah 'ammah (general amirate), in which the incumbent held supreme direction of military affairs, right of nomination and control of the judiciary, levying of taxes, maintenance of public security, safeguarding the state religion against innovation, administration of police and presiding at public prayers on Friday; and the other of the more restricted type (khassah, special), in which the governor had no jurisdiction over judges and taxes. But all this classification was largely theoretical, as the authority of the provincial governor increased in direct proportion to the personal ability of the governor, the weakness of the caliph and the distance from the federal capital. The local income from each province was in almost every case applied to meet the governmental expenses of that province. If the expenses were less than the local income the governor remitted the balance to the caliphal treasury. The administration of justice was in the hands of a provincial qadi assisted by a number of deputies stationed in the various sub-divisions of the provinces.

<sup>1</sup> Compare list of provinces as given here with lists in Le Strange, *Eastern Caliphate*, pp. 1-9; Zaydan, *Tamaddun*, vol. ii, pp. 37-445 <sup>von</sup> Kremer, *Cultur-geschichte*, vol. i, p. 184.

<sup>2</sup> Pp- 47-54-

## CHAPTER XXVI

### ■ Abbasid society

The primitive tribal system, the basic pattern of Arabian social organization, entirely broke down under the 'Abbasids, who owed their throne to foreign elements. Even the caliphs in such matters as the choice of wives and mothers for their children set no value on Arabian blood. Among the 'Abbasids only three caliphs were sons of free mothers: abu-al-'Abbas, al-Mahdi and al-Amin,<sup>48</sup> of whom the last enjoyed the unique distinction of having both parents from the Prophet's family.<sup>49</sup> Among the Umayyads the twelfth caliph, Yazid III, was the first whose mother was a non-Arab. But she was at least supposedly a descendant of the last Persian emperor, Yazdagird, and was captured by Qutaybah in Sogdiana and presented by al-Hajjaj to the Caliph al-Walid. Among the 'Abbasids al-Mansur's mother was a Berber slave; al-Ma'mun's a Persian slave; al-Wathiq's and al-Muhtadi's were Greek; al-Muntasir's was a Greco-Abyssinian; al-Musta'in's a Slav (saqlabiyaji) al-Muktafi's as well as al-Muqtadir's were Turkish slaves; and al-Mustadi's Armenian.<sup>50</sup> Harun's mother, another foreign slave, was the famous al-Khayzuran—the first woman to exercise any appreciable influence in 'Abbasid caliphal affairs.<sup>51</sup>

In bringing about this fusion of the Arabians with their subject peoples polygamy, concubinage and the slave trade

proved effective methods. As the pure Arabian element receded into the background non-Arabs, half-breeds and sons of freed women began to take their place. Soon the Arabian aristocracy was superseded by a hierarchy of officials representing diverse nationalities, at first preponderantly Persian and later Turkish.

A bard gave expression to the proud Arabian sentiment when he sang.        Sons of concubines have become

So numerous amongst us; Lead me, O God, to a land

Where I shall see no bastards.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately Arab historians had their interest too much centred in the caliph's affairs and political happenings to leave us an adequate picture of the social and economic life of the common people in those days. But from sporadic, incidental passages in their works, from mainly literary sources and from ordinary life in the conservative Moslem Orient of today, it is not impossible to reconstruct an outline of that picture.

The early \*Abbasid woman enjoyed the same measure of Home liberty as her Umayyad sister; but toward the end of the tenth <sup>1</sup><sup>e</sup> century, under the Buwayhids, the system of strict seclusion and absolute segregation of the sexes had become general. Not only do we read of women in the high circles of that early period achieving distinction and exercising influence in state affairs— such as al-Khayzuran, al-Mahdi's wife and al-Rashid's mother; 'Ulayyah, daughter of al-Mahdi; Zubaydah, al-Rashid's wife and al-Amin's mother; and Buran, al-Ma'mun's wife—but of Arab maidens going to war and commanding troops, composing poetry and competing with men in literary pursuits or enlivening society with their wit, musical talent and vocal

accomplishments. Such was 'Ubaydah al-Tunburiyah (i.e. the pandore-lady), who won national fame in the days of al-Mu'tasim as a beauty, a singer and a musician.<sup>2</sup>

In the period of decline, characterized by excessive concubinage, laxity of sex morality and indulgence in luxury, the position of woman sank to the low level we find in the Arabian Nights. There woman is represented as the personification of cunning and intrigue and as the repository of all base sentiments and unworthy thoughts. In an extraordinary letter of condolence to a friend who had lost his daughter, abu-Bakr al-Khwarizmi ("j" ca. 993 or 1002), the first author to leave a collection of literary correspondence, asserts: "We are in an age in which if one of us . . . should marry his daughter to a grave he would acquire thereby the best of sons-in-law .'

<sup>1</sup> Mubarrad, p. 302.                      ' Aghant, vol. xix, pp. 134-7.

\* Rasail (Constantinople, 1297), p. 20.

Marriage has been regarded almost universally in Islam as a positive duty, the neglect of which is subject to severe reproach, and the gift of children, especially if sons, a boon from God. A wife's first duty consisted in the service of her husband, the care of the children and the management of household affairs; any spare time would be occupied with spinning and weaving. The fashionable head-dress for women, introduced by 'Ulayyah, halfsister of al-Rashid, was evidently a dome-shaped cap, round the bottom of which was a circlet that could be adorned with jewels. Among other objects of feminine adornment were anklets (sing, khalkhàl) and bracelets {asâwir}.

Men's clothing has varied but little since those days. The common head-gear was the black high-peaked hat, qalansu-

wah, made of felt or wool and introduced by al-Mansur.<sup>1</sup> Wide trousers (sarâwîi) of Persian origin,<sup>2</sup> shirt, vest and jacket (guftari)? with outer mantle Çaba or jubbah% completed the wardrobe of a gentleman.<sup>6</sup> The theologians, following the instructions of abu-Yûsuf, al-Rashid's distinguished judge, wore distinctive black turbans and mantles (sing, taylasari)\*

Judging by the erotic expressions of the poets of the age the early Arabian ideals of feminine beauty seem not to have suffered much change. Al-Nuwayri devotes a goodly portion of a volume<sup>7</sup> to quotations descriptive of such physical charms. The woman's stature should be like the bamboo {khayzuran) among plants, her face as round as the full moon, her hair darker than the night, her cheeks white and rosy with a mole not unlike a drop of ambergris upon a plate of alabaster, her eyes intensely black without any adventitious antimony {kuhl) and large like those of a wild deer, her eyelids drowsy or languid (saqlm), her

<sup>1</sup> Above, p. 294. The red fez, tarbush, still worn in Moslem lands, is a modern article.

<sup>2</sup> Jâhiz, Bay an, vol. iii, p. 9; R. P. A. Dozy, Dictionnaire détaillé des noms des vêtements (Amsterdam, 1845), pp- 203'4-

<sup>3</sup> Dozy, pp. 162-3. '

<sup>4</sup> This Arabic word has worked its way from Spanish, where we find it in a late tenth-century dictionary, into the rest of the Romance languages and thence into English and the other Germanic languages as well as the Slavonic. In English it has left an interesting survival in the word “gibbet”, meaning “gallows”.

<sup>6</sup> This style of dress is still followed by the older generation in Lebanon and Syria.

<sup>9</sup> Ibn-Khallikân, vol. iii, p. 334 = de Slane, vol. iv, p. 273; Aghdni, vol. v, p. 109, 11. 23-4, vol. vi, p. 69, 1. 23; ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. ii, p. 4, 1. 23.

<sup>7</sup> Nihâyah, vol. ii, pp. 18 seq. For an illustration of the wealth of the Arabic language in terms describing women see ibn-Qayyim al-Jawziyah, Akhbâr al-Nisa (Cairo, 1319), pp. 119 seq.

mouth small with teeth like pearls set in coral, her bosom pomegranate-like, her hips wide and her fingers tapering, with the extremities dyed with vermilion henna (hinna).

The most conspicuous piece of furniture now came to be the diwan. a sofa extending along three sides of the room. Raised seats in the form of chairs were introduced under the earlier dynasty, but cushions laid on small square mattresses (from Ar. matrah) on the floor where one could comfortably squat remained popular. Hand-woven carpets covered the floor. Food was served on large round trays of brass set on a low table in front of the diwan or the floor cushions. In the homes of the wellto-do the trays were of silver and the table of wood inlaid with ebony, mother-of-pearl or tortoise-shell—not unlike those still manufactured in Damascus. Those .same people who had once enjoyed scorpions, beetles and weasels as a luxury,<sup>1</sup> who thought rice a venomous food<sup>2</sup> and used flattened bread for writing material,<sup>3</sup> by this time had their gastronomic tastes whetted for the delicacies of the civilized world, including such Persian dishes as the greatly desired stew, stkbaj, <sup>an<^</sup> the rich sweets, faludhaj. Their chickens were now fed on shelled nuts, almonds and milk. In summer, houses were cooled by ice.<sup>4</sup> Non-alcoholic drinks in the form of sherbet,<sup>5</sup>

consisting of water sweetened with sugar and flavoured with extracts of violets, bananas, roses or mulberries, were served, but of course not exclusively. Coffee did not attain vogue until the fifteenth century and tobacco was unknown before the discovery of the New World.<sup>6</sup> A ninth- to tenth-century author<sup>7</sup> has left us a work intended to give an exposition of the sentiments and manners of a man or culture {zarlf)a gentleman, in that period. He is one in possession of polite behaviour (adab), manly virtue (muru ah) and elegant manners

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-al-Faqih, pp. 187-8.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khaldun, Muqaddamah, p. 170.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-Khaldun, p. 144- Cf. above, p. 156.

< Ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. 1, pp. 139'40. Pp. 82-3 quote from an earlier source a prescription which "can solidify water even in June or July .

<sup>5</sup> From Ar. sharbah. drink. Eng. "syrup" comes from a cognate word sharab.

<sup>6</sup> Introduced into South Arabia in the fourteenth century', coffee became domesticated in Makkah early in the fifteenth, and in the first decade of the sixteenth century was first known in Cairo through Sufis from al-Yaman, who used it at the Azhar Mosque to produce the necessary wakefulness for nightly devotions See above p. 19. Inhaling of smoke from burning herbs for medical purposes or perhaps for pleasure had been practised before America's discovery.

<sup>7</sup> Al-Washsha , Kitab al-Muwashsha, ed. R. Briinnow (Leyden, 1886), pp. I, 1-, 33, 37, 124, 125, 129-31, 142.



By courtesy of Fahim Kouchakji

## A NINTH-CENTURY VASE FROM AL-RAQQA, PART-TIME CAPITAL OF HÀRÙN AL-RASHÌD

It is of turquoise greenish-blue colour, forty-nine centimetres high

(zarf}, who abstains from joking, holds fellowship with the right comrades, has high standards of veracity, is scrupulous in the fulfilment of his promises, keeps a secret, wears unsoiled and unpatched clothes, and at the table takes small mouthfuls, converses or laughs but little, chews his food slowly, licks not his fingers, avoids garlic and onions and refrains from using the toothpick in toilet rooms, baths, public meetings and on the streets.

Alcoholic drinks were often indulged in both in company and in private. Judging by the countless stories of revelry in such works as the Agham and the Arabian Nights and by the numerous songs and poems in praise of wine (khamriyaf) by the debauched abu-Nuwas (f ca, 810), the one-day caliph, ibn-al-Mu'tazz (f 908), and similar bards, prohibition, one of the distinctive features of Moslem religion, did no more prohibit then than did the eighteenth amendment to the Constitution of the United States. Even caliphs, vizirs, princes and judges paid no heed to the religious injunction.<sup>52</sup> Scholars, poets, singers and musicians were especially desired as boon companions. This practice, which was of Persian origin,<sup>53</sup> became an established institution under the early \*Abbasids and developed professionals under al-Rashid. Other than this caliph, al-Hadi, al-Amin, al-Ma'mun, al-Mu'tasim, al-Wathiq and al-Mutawakkil were given to drink; al-Mansur and al-

Muhtadi were opposed to it. Indeed al-Nawaji<sup>54 55 56</sup> despairs of finding room in his book for all the caliphs, vizirs and secretaries addicted to the use of the forbidden beverage. Khamr, made of dates, was the favourite. Ibn-Khaldun argues that such personages as al-Rashid and al-Ma'mun used only nabidhf prepared by soaking grapes, raisins or dates in water and allowing the juice to ferment slightly. Such drink was judged legal under certain conditions by at least one school of Moslem jurisprudence, the Hanafite. Muhammad himself drank it, especially before it was three days old.<sup>57</sup>

Convivial parties featuring “the daughter of the vine” and song were not uncommon. At these drinking-bouts (sing, majlis al-shirabV) the host and guests perfumed their beards with civet or rose-water and wore special garments of bright colours (thiydb al-munádamahf The room was made fragrant by ambergris or aloes-wood burning in a censer. The songstresses who participated in such gatherings were mostly slaves of loose character, as illustrated by many stories,<sup>2</sup> who constituted the gravest menace to the morals of the youth of the age.<sup>3</sup> The description of a certain home in al-Kufah during the reign of al-Mansur sounds more like that of a café chantant, with Sallamah al-Zarqa' (the blue-eyed) as its prima donna.<sup>4</sup> The laity had access to wine in the Christian monasteries and the special bars conducted mainly by Jews. Christians and Jews were the “bootleggers” of the time.

## Baths

“Cleanliness is a part of faith”—so runs a Prophetic tradition that is still on every lip in Moslem lands. Arabia had no baths that we hear of before Muhammad. He himself is represented as prejudiced against them and as having permitted men to enter them for purposes of cleanliness

only, each wearing a cloth. In the time we are studying, however, public baths (sing, hammam) had become popular not only for ceremonial ablutions and for their salutary effects, but also as resorts of amusement and mere luxury. Women were allowed their use on specially reserved days. Baghdad, according to al-Khatib,<sup>5</sup> boasted in the days of al-Muqtadir (908-32) some 27,000 public baths, and in other times even 60,000,<sup>6</sup> all of which—like most figures in Arabic sources—seem highly exaggerated. Al-Ya'qubi<sup>7</sup> makes the number 10,000 not long after the foundation of Baghdad. The Moorish traveller ibn-Battūtah,<sup>8</sup> who visited Baghdad in 1327, found in each of the thirteen quarters composing its west side two or three baths of the most elaborate kind, each supplied with hot and cold running water.

Then as now the bath-house comprised several chambers with mosaic pavements and marble-lined inner walls clustering round a large central chamber. This innermost chamber, crowned by

<sup>1</sup> Nawáji, p. 38.

<sup>a</sup> Agháni, vol. xi, pp. 98-9, vol. xviii, pp. 182-9.

\* Washsha', pp. 92 seq.

<sup>4</sup> Agháni, vol. xiii, pp. 128 seq. Cf. Nuwayri, vol. v, pp. 72 seq.

' Tarikh, vol. i, pp. 1 18-19.  
117.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. p.

' Buldán, p. 250, 11. 9-10, cf. p. 254, 11. 8-9. <sup>9</sup> Vol. ii, pp. 105-7. a dome studded with small round glazed apertures for the admission of light, was heated by steam rising from a central jet of water in the middle of a basin.

The outer rooms were used for lounging and for enjoying drinks and refreshments.

Sports, like the fine arts, have throughout history been an Pastimes appendage more of Indo-European than Semitic civilization. Engaging in them involves physical exertion for its own sake, which could not very well become a desideratum for the son of Arabia with his utilitarian temperament and the warmness of the climate.

Under the caliphate certain indoor games became popular. Reference has already been made to a sort of club-house in Makkah under the Umayyads provided with facilities for playing chess, backgammon and dice. As with several other innovations, al-Rashid is credited with being the first 'Abbasid caliph to have played and encouraged chess.<sup>58</sup> Chess (Ar. shitrānj, ultimately from Sanskrit), originally an Indian game,<sup>59</sup> soon became the favourite indoor pastime of the aristocracy, displacing dice. This caliph is supposed to have included among his presents to Charlemagne a chess-board, just as in the Crusading period the Old Man of the Mountain presented another to St. Louis. Among other games played with a board was backgammon (nard, trick-track), also of Indian origin.<sup>60 61</sup>

Notable in the list of outdoor sports were archery, polo(/£to, from Pers, chawgan? bent stick), ball and mallets (sawlajan, pall-mall, a sort of croquet or hockey), fencing, javelin-throwing (Jarid\ horse-racing and above all hunting. Among the qualifications of a prospective boon companion al-Jahiz<sup>62</sup> lists ability in archery, hunting, playing ball and chess—in all of which the companion may equal his royal master with no fear of affronting him. Among the caliphs particularly fond of polo was al-Mu'tasim, whose Turkish general, al-Afshin, once refused to play against him because he did not want to be against the commander of the

believers even in a game.<sup>63</sup> References are made to a ball game in which a broad piece of wood (tafydd') was used. Could this be tennis in its rudimentary form?<sup>64</sup> Al-Mas'udi<sup>65 66</sup> has preserved for us the description of a horse-race at al-Raqqah in which a courser of al-Rashid's won first place, to the enthusiastic delight of the caliph, who witnessed the event. In the *\*lqd*<sup>2</sup> we find a number of poems in description and honour of prizewinning horses. Betting, as we learn from this same source, enlivened such races.

In the 'Abbasid period, as in the earlier one, hunting was the favourite outdoor pastime of caliphs and princes. Al-Amin was particularly fond of hunting lions,<sup>67</sup> and a brother of his met his death pursuing wild boars.<sup>68</sup> Both abu-Muslim al-Khurasani and al-Mu'tasim were fond of hunting with the cheetah. The number of early Arabic books dealing with hunting, trapping and falconry testify to the keen interest in these sports.

Falconry and hawking were introduced into Arabia from Persia, as the Arabic vocabulary relating to these sports indicates. They became particularly favoured in the later period of the caliphate<sup>69</sup> and in that of the Crusades.<sup>70</sup> Hunting with the falcon (bazj or sparrow-hawk (bashiḡ)) is still practised in Persia, al-Traq, Dayr al-Zur and the 'Alawite region of Syria in practically the same manner as described in the Arabian Nights. For gazelles or antelopes, hares, partridges, wild geese, ducks and qata (a species of grouse), hawks and falcons were employed and assisted in the case of big game by dogs. The first thing for a Moslem hunter to do after seizing his prey would be to cut its throat; otherwise its flesh would be unlawful.<sup>71</sup> Under certain conditions the hunting-party would form a circuit (halqah) surrounding and closing in on the spot in which the game happened to abound. Al-Mu'tasim built a horseshoe-shaped wall touching

the Tigris at its two extremities and used his circuit of men to drive the game inside, thus shutting it in between the wall and the river.<sup>1</sup> Al-Musta'sim also used the circuit technique in his chase, as did the Saljuqs.<sup>2</sup> Among other late caliphs al-Mustanjid (1160-70) organized a number of regular hunting-parties. Certain caliphs and rulers kept wild beasts such as lions and tigers for striking awe into the hearts of their subjects and visitors;<sup>3</sup> others had dogs and monkeys for pets. A son of al-Muqtadir's vizir, who resided in Cairo and held a high position in its government, had for a hobby the collecting of serpents, scorpions and other venomous animals, which he kept under good care in a special building near his palace.<sup>4</sup>

At the head of the social register stood the caliph and his Slaves family, the government officials, the scions of the Hashimite clan and the satellites of all these groups. In this last class we may include the soldiers and bodyguards, the favoured friends and boon companions, as well as the clients and servants.

The servants were almost all slaves recruited from nonMoslem peoples and captured by force, taken prisoner in time of war or purchased in time of peace. Some were negroes, others were Turks and still others were white. The white slaves (mamalik) were mainly Greeks and Slavs, Armenians and Berbers. Certain slaves were eunuchs {khisyati) attached to the service of the harem. Others, termed g hitman, who might also be eunuchs, were the recipients of special favours from their masters, wore rich and attractive uniforms and often beautified and perfumed their bodies in effeminate fashion. We read of ghtlman in the reign of al-Rashid;<sup>5</sup> but it was evidently al-Amin who, following Persian precedent, established in the Arabic world the ghtlman institution for the practice of

unnatural sexual relations.<sup>6</sup> A judge under al-Ma'mun used four hundred such youths.<sup>7</sup> Poets like abu-Nuwas did not disdain to give public expression to their perverted passions and to address amorous pieces of their composition to "beardless young boys".

The maidens (Jawart) among slaves were also used as singers, dancers and concubines, and some of them exerted appreciable influence over their caliph masters. Such was dhat-al-Khal (she

1 Fakhri, pp. 73'4. ' ^dr al-Uwal, p. 135.

<sup>3</sup> Fakhri, p. 30; 'lqd, vol. i, p. 198, 11. 4 ^7- . Kutubl' vob b PP' x34'5'

' Tabari, vol. iii, p. 669; same in ibn-al-Athir-, vol. vi, p. 120.

- fabari, vol. iii, p. 950, copied by ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi, p. 205.

' Mas'udi, vol. vii, p. 47.

of the mole), whom al-Rashid had bought for 70,000 dirhams and in a fit of jealousy bestowed on one of his male servants. Having taken an oath to grant her request on a certain day, no matter what the request might be, al-Rashid is said to have appointed her husband governor over Faris for seven years.<sup>72</sup> In order to wean him from another singing-girl to whom he became attached, al-Rashid's wife Zubaydah presented her husband with ten maidens, one of whom became the mother of al-Ma'mun and another of al-Mu'tasim.<sup>73</sup> The legendary story of Tawaddud, the beautiful and talented slave girl in The Thousand and One Nights (nights 437-62) whom al-Rashid was willing to purchase for 100,000 dinars after she had passed with flying colours a

searching test before his savants in medicine, law, astronomy, philosophy, music and mathematics—to say nothing of rhetoric, grammar, poetry, history and the Koran—illustrates how highly cultured some of these maids must have been. Al-Amin's contribution consisted in promoting a corps of female pages, the members of which bobbed their hair, dressed like boys and wore silk turbans. The innovation soon became popular with both the higher and the lower classes of society.<sup>74</sup> An eye-witness reports that when on a Palm Sunday he called on al-Ma'mun he found in his presence twenty Greek maidens, all bedecked and adorned, dancing with gold crosses on their necks and olive branches and palm leaves in their hands. The distribution of 3000 dinars among the dancers brought the affair to a grand finale.<sup>75</sup>

An idea of the prevalence of slavery may be obtained from the high figures used in enumerating those in the caliphal household. The palace of al-Muqtadir (908-32), we are told, housed 11,000 Greek and Sudanese eunuchs.<sup>76</sup> Al-Mutawakkil, according to a report, had 4000 concubines, all of whom shared his nuptial bed.<sup>77</sup> On one occasion this caliph received as a present two hundred slaves from one of his generals.<sup>7</sup> It was customary for governors and generals to send presents, including girls received or exacted from among their subjects, to the caliph or vizir;<sup>8</sup> failure to do so was interpreted as a sign of rebellion. Al-Ma'mun devised the scheme of sending some of his trusted slaves as presents, expecting them to act as spies on the suspect recipients or to do away with them in case of necessity.<sup>1</sup>

The commonalty was composed of an upper class bordering Economic on the aristocracy and comprised *littérateurs* and *belletrists*, <sup>^</sup>ercent learned men, artists, merchants, craftsmen and professionals, and of a lower class forming the majority



of the nation and made up of farmers, herdsmen and country folk who represented the native population and now enjoyed the status of dhimmis. In the following chapter we shall treat of the intellectual class at some length. Suffice it to note here that the general stage of culture in the period of 'Abbasid primacy was by no means low.

[1](#)

Khatib, vol. i, p. 119.  
298-9.

[2](#) Mas'udi, vol. viii, pp.

[2](#)

<sup>3</sup> Cf. ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 337; Burckhardt, Travels, vol. i, p. 196.

[3](#)

<sup>4</sup> Agkani, vol. ix, p. 83.

[4](#)

She was ten years old when betrothed to al-Ma'mun; ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 166.

[5](#)

<sup>9</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 1081-4; Mas'udi, vol. vii, pp. 65-6; ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi,

[6](#)

p. 279; Tha'alibi, Lata'if, pp. 73-4; ibn-Khaldun, Muqaddamah, pp. 144-5.

[7](#)

Since the latter part of the nineteenth century the modern Arab Orient has been passing through a similar period of translation, mainly from French and English.

[8](#)

\$a'id ibn-Ahmad (al-Qadi al-Andalusi), T<sup>^</sup>aqat al-Umam, ed. L. Cheikho

(Beirut, 1912), pp. 49-50; Yaqut, Udaba', vol. vi, p. 268; Mas'udi, vol. viii, pp. 290-91.

[9](#)

<sup>8</sup> Pers, naivbakht, good luck. Many members of this family distinguished themselves in the science of the stars. Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 317, 3<sup>18</sup> (where the name occurs as Nibakht or Naybakht), 1364.

[10](#)

Fihrist, p 274.

[11](#)

Ar Tundaysabur. The city, founded by the Sasanid Shapur I, whence the name, which may mean "camp of Shapur", stood on the site of the modern village Shahabad in Khuzistan, south-western Persia.

[12](#)

Cf. Fihnst, p. 296; ibn-al-Tbri, pp. 213-15. "Bakht", which ibn-abi-U<sub>ṣ</sub>aybi ah (vol. i, p. 125) takes for a Syriac word

meaning “servant , is for Pahlawi bokht, “hath delivered”, making the family name mean “Jesus hath delivered .

[13](#)

Ibn-al-'Ibri, p. 215, copied by ibn-abi-Uṣaybi'ah, vol. i, p. 125.

[14](#)

\* Ibn-al-'Ibri, pp. 226-7; Qifti, pp. 134'5-

[15](#)

- See below, p. 357.

[16](#)

Fikrist, p. 298, copied by Qifti, p. 80. [17](#) Ibid. p. 246, 1. 5.

[17](#)

' Ibid. p. 248. [18](#) Qifti PP- 38, 42.

[18](#)

<sup>5</sup> Ibn-abi-Uṣaybi'ah, vol. i, pp. 188-9; Qifti PP\* 94'5

[19](#)

canonical works of Galen and dated 572 (a.D. 1176), see Ilitti, Faris and Abd-al-

[20](#)

Malik, Catalog of the Garrett Collection of Arabic Manuscripts (Princeton, 1938),

[21](#)

no. 1075.

[21](#) Qiffi' P\* 99

[22](#)

' Ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. i, pp. 187-8; ibn-al- Ibri, p. 251.

[23](#)

' Ibn-al-'Ibri, pp. 251-2.

[24](#)

L. Leclerc, Histoire de la médecine arabe (Paris, 1876), vol. i, p. 139.

[25](#)

His al-Dhakhirah fi 'Ilm al-Tibb was edited by G. Sobhy (Cairo, 1928).

[26](#)

In reality pseudo-Sâbians. See below, p. 358.

[27](#)

• Fihrist, p. 267.  
pp. 177, 298.

[29](#) Ibn-Khallikân, vol. i,

[28](#)

<sup>6</sup> Ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. i, p. 216.

[30](#) Ibid. pp. 224-6.

[29](#)

- Ibid. p. 226: Qifti, pp. 57-9: Fihrist, p. 272.

[30](#)

- Qifti, p. 428. <sup>10</sup> Fihrist, p. 265.

[31](#)

Mas'ûdi, vol. vii, p. 278.

[32](#)

<sup>1</sup> See Ya'qûbi, vol. ii, pp. 437-47 [32](#) se(l-\ Fakhrt, p. 236.

[33](#)

Fakhri, pp. 261-2; Tabari, vol. iii, p. 5 [32](#)3

317

[34](#)

Fakhri, p. 205. [35](#) Ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi, pp. 19-20.

[35](#)

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Hilal al-\$abi', Tuhfat al-Umara fi Tarikh al-Wuzara ,  
ed. H. F. Amedroz

[36](#)

(Beirut, 1904), p. 306.

[37](#)

Pp- 33-47-

[38](#)

Or muttawwi'ah, Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 1008 seq.\ ibn-Khaldun, vol. iii, p. 260.

[39](#)

Tabari, vol. iii, p. 41, 11. 17-18, copied by ibn-al-Athir, vol. v, p. 322, 11. 14-15.

[40](#)

When al-Ma'mun was fighting his brother he had to restore the standard 960

dirhams, which sum was likewise paid by his brother, labari, vol. iii, p. 830, 11. 7'8, p. 867, 1. 14. , ..

[41](#)

Khatib, vol. i, p. 70; Tabari, vol. 111, p. 3<sup>39</sup>\

[42](#)

<sup>6</sup> Mentioned by Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 99& seq.\ ibn-Khaldun, vol. 111, p. 238, 1 17 p. 245, 11. 23, 26.

[43](#)

Ibn-Khaldun, vol. iii, p. 275.

[44](#)

Aghdni, vol. xvii, p. 45; ibn-Khaldun, vol. iii, p. 260, 1. 20.

[45](#)

Oman, Art of War, 2nd ed., vol. i, p. 209.

[46](#)

» “Tactica”, Constitutio xviii, § 123, in Migne, Patrología Graca, vol. cvii.

[47](#)

« “De administrando imperio”, raput xv. in Migne. Patrología Graca, vol. cxiii.

[48](#)

Tha'aliLi, Lata if , p. 75.                      \* Tabari, vol. iii, p. 937, 11. 12-13.

[49](#)

• See Tha'alibi, pp. 75-7; Mas'udi, passim.

[50](#)

<sup>4</sup> For the part she was suspected of having played in the death of her son, the Caliph al-Hadi, and the succession of her other and favourite son, al-Rashid, consult

[51](#)

Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 569 seq., copied by ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi, pp. 67 seq. Cf. Mas'udi, vol. vi, pp. 282-3.

[52](#)

See Nuwayri, Nihdyah, vol. iv, pp. 9<sup>[53](#)</sup> se(T

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[53](#)

'Jahiz, Taj, pp. 23, 72; Nawaji, Halb ah, p. 26.  
99» “• \*4-7-

P-

[54](#)

<sup>8</sup> Muqaddamah, p. 16. Khamr is the term used in the Koran (5 :92-3) for the prohibited drink. What provides opportunity for the exercise of ingenuity on the part of interpreters is firstly the fact that at the time of the Prophet there was not in al-Madinah any khamr of grapes, the beverage of its inhabitants being prepared from dates; and secondly that these juices do not ferment until a certain time lapses

[55](#)

unless they are treated by special methods. Consult 'Iqd, vol. iii, pp. 405-14.

[56](#)

Mishkah, vol. ii, pp. 172-3; ibn-Hanbal, Musnad (Cairo, 1313), vol. 1, pp.

[57](#)

240, 287, 320; Bukhari, vol. vi, p. 232.

[58](#)

Mas'udi, vol. viii, p. 296. [59](#) Ibid. vol. i, pp. 159-61. <sup>9</sup>  
Ibid. pp. 157-8.

[59](#)



<sup>4</sup> Cf. “chicane”, name given to an old game in Languedoc and elsewhere played

[60](#)

on foot with a mallet and a ball of hard wood.

[61](#)

<sup>5</sup> Taj, p. 72. For other qualifications consult Nawaji, pp. 25 seq.

[62](#)

- Ibn-al-'Abbas, Athdr al-Uwal, p. 130.

[63](#)

' Mas'udi, vol. viii, p. 296,1. 2. Cf. Afhdr, p. 129. U- 3'4-

[64](#)

The word “tennis”, generally supposed to have come from the French verb tenez = take heed, is probably from “Tinnis”, the Arabic name of an Egyptian city in the Delta noted in the Middle Ages for its linen fabrics, which may have been used for making tennis balls. See Malcolm D. Whitman, Tennis: Origins and Mysteries (New York, 1932), pp. 24-32.

[65](#)

Vol. vi, pp. 348-9.

- Vol. i, pp. 63-5.

[66](#)

<sup>4</sup> Mas'udi, vol. vi, pp. 432-3.  
97, 11. 27-9.

» Aghdni, vol. ix, p.

[67](#)

<sup>9</sup> Fihrist, ^ . 315, and ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, p. 172, vol. iii, p. 209, mention a number of Arabic books on hunting and falconry.

[68](#)

<sup>7</sup> For one of the earliest treatments of this subject in Arabic see Usamah ibn-

[69](#)

Munqidh, Kitab al-/ 'tibar, ed. Hitti (Princeton, 1930), pp. 191-226; tr. Hitti, An

[70](#)

Arab-Syrian Gentleman and Warrior (New York, 1929, reprint Beirut, 1964

[71](#)

PP- 221-54.  
16 : 116.

[71](#) Koran 2 : 168, 5 : 4,

[72](#)

Aghani, vol. xv, p. 80, quoted by Nuwayri, vol. v, pp. 889.

[73](#)

' Aghani, vol. xvi, p. 137.  
viii, p; 299.

[74](#) Mas'udi, vol.

[74](#)

<sup>4</sup> Aghani, vol. xix, pp. 138-9.  
352.

[77](#) Fakhri, p.

[75](#)

• Mas'udi, vol. vii, p. 276.  
vol. vii, p. 281.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

[76](#)

• Ibn-al-Athir, vol. vii, pp. 211-12; Tabari, vol. iii, p. 627,  
copied by ibn-al-

[77](#)

Athir, vol. vi, p. 86.

[78](#)

<sup>6</sup> For a MS. of another work, al- Sina' ah al-Saghirah,  
comprising ten of the sixteen

The wide extent of the empire ■ and the high level which civilization attained involved extensive international trade. The early merchants were Christians, Jews<sup>2</sup> and Zoroastrians, but these were later largely superseded by Moslems and Arabs, who did not disdain trade as they did agriculture. Such ports as Baghdad, al-Basrah, Sirâf,<sup>3</sup> Cairo and Alexandria soon developed into centres of active land and maritime commerce.

Eastward, Moslem traders ventured as far as China, which according to Arab tradition was reached from al-Basrah as early as the days of the second 'Abbasid caliph, al-Mansûr.<sup>4</sup> The earliest Arabic source treating of the subject of Arab and Persian maritime communication with India and China is a report of voyages by Sulaymân al-Tâjir (the merchant) and other Moslem traders in the third Moslem century.<sup>5</sup> This trade was based on silk, the earliest of China's magnificent gifts to the West, and usually followed what has been styled "the great silk way"<sup>6</sup> going through Samarqand and Chinese Turkestan, a region less traversed today by civilized man than almost any other part of the habitable world. Goods were generally transported by relays; few caravans went the whole distance. But diplomatic relations were certainly established before the time of Arab traders.

<sup>1</sup> 'Iqd, vol. i, p. 196.  
153-4<sup>^</sup> .

<sup>2</sup> Consult ibn-Khurdâdhbih, pp.

<sup>8</sup> A town in Persia on the Persian Gulf. The people of Sirâf and Umân (Mas üdi, vol. i, pp. 281-2) were among the best-known mariners of the early Abbâsid period.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Marshall Broomhall, Islam in China (London, 1910)\*, pp. 5'3<sup>^</sup>-

<sup>6</sup> Silsilat al-Tawarikh [xz?], ed. Langles (Paris, 1811); tr. G. Ferrand, Voyage du marchand arabe Sulaymân en Inde et en Chine (Paris, 1922)

<sup>8</sup> Thomas F. Carter, The Invention of Printing in China and its Spread Westward (New York, 1925), pp. 85 seq.

Legend makes Sa'd ibn-abi-Waqqas, the conqueror of Persia, the envoy sent by the Prophet to China. Sa'd's "grave" is still revered in Canton. Certain inscriptions on the old Chinese monuments relating to Islam in China are clearly forgeries prompted by religious pride.<sup>1</sup> By the mid-eighth century several embassies had been exchanged. In the Chinese records of that century the amir al-muminin is called hanmi-mo-mo-ni\ abu-al-'Abbas, the first 'Abbasid caliph, A-bo-lo-ba\ and Harun, A-lun. In the time of these caliphs a number of Moslems settled in China. At first such Moslems appear under the name Ta-shih<sup>2</sup> and later under the title Hui-Hui (Muhammadans).<sup>3</sup> The first European mention of Saracens in China appears to be that of Marco Polo.<sup>4</sup> It was also Moslem traders who carried Islam into the islands that in 1949 formed the United States of Indonesia.

Westward, Moslem merchants reached Morocco and Spain. A thousand years before de Lesseps an Arab caliph, Harun, entertained the idea of digging a canal through the Isthmus of Suez.<sup>5</sup> Arab Mediterranean trade, however, never rose to great prominence. The Black Sea was likewise inhospitable to it, though in the tenth century brisk land trade is noticed with the peoples of the Volga regions to the north. But the Caspian Sea, because of its proximity to the Persian centres and the prosperous cities of Samarkand and Bukhara with their hinterland, was the scene of some commercial intercourse. Moslem merchants carried with them dates, sugar, cotton and woollen fabrics, steel tools

and glassware; they imported, among other commodities, spices, camphor and silk from farther Asia, and ivory, ebony and negro slaves from Africa.

An idea of the fortunes amassed by the Rothschilds and Rockefellers of the age may be gained from the case of the Baghdad jeweller ibn-al-Jassas, who remained wealthy after al-Muqtadir had confiscated 16,000,000 dinars of his property, and became the first of a family of distinguished jewel merchants.<sup>6</sup> Certain Basrah merchants whose ships carried goods to distant parts of the world had an annual income of more than a

<sup>1</sup> See Paul Pelliot in *Journal asiatique* (1913), vol. ii, pp. 177-91.

<sup>2</sup> From Pahlawi Tajik, modern Tazi, Arab. The term is evidently a Persianized form of Tayyi', an Arab tribe.

<sup>3</sup> Consult Isaac Mason in *Journal of the North-China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. ix (1929), pp. 42-78.

<sup>4</sup> For Moslem settlements in Korea (al-Shila) see ibn-Khurdadhbih, pp. 70, 170.

<sup>6</sup> Kutubi, vol. i, p. 177. million dirhams each. An uneducated miller of al-Basrah and Baghdad could afford to distribute as daily alms among the poor a hundred dinars, and was later appointed by al-Mu'tasim as his vizir.<sup>1</sup> In Siraf the home of the average merchant cost over ten thousand dinars, some over thirty thousand dinars; and many maritime traders were worth 4,000,000 dinars each.<sup>2</sup> Some of these Siraf merchants "spent their lives on the water", and al-Istakhri<sup>3</sup> heard of one who had spent forty years on board ship.

No commercial activity could have reached such dimensions if industry had it not rested on extensive home industry and agriculture. Hand industry flourished in various parts of the empire. In Western Asia it centred chiefly in the manufacture of rugs, tapestry, silk, cotton and woollen fabrics, satin, brocade (dibaj), sofa (from Ar. suffaji) and cushion covers, as well as other articles of furniture and kitchen utensils. The many looms of Persia and al-Traql turned out carpets and textiles maintained at a high standard by distinctive marks. Al-Musta'in's mother had a rug specially ordered for her at a cost of 130,000,000 dirhams, bearing figures of all sorts of birds in gold which had rubies and other precious stones for eyes.<sup>4 5</sup> A quarter in Baghdad named after 'Attab, an Umayyad prince who was its most distinguished resident, gave its name to a striped fabric, attabif\* first manufactured there in the twelfth century. The fabric was imitated by the Arabs in Spain and under the trade name tabi became popular in France, Italy and other lands of Europe. The term survives in "tabby", applied to streaked or marked cats. Al-Kufah produced the silk and partly silk kerchiefs for the head that are still worn under the name kuflyah. Tawwaj, Fasa and other towns of Faris boasted a number of high-class factories where carpets, embroideries, brocades and robes of honour—a mark of distinction in the East—were manufactured first for the use of the royalty.<sup>6</sup> Such products were known as tiraz (from Pers.) and bore the name or cipher of the sultan or caliph embroidered on them. In Tustar and al-Sus in Khuzistan (ancient Susiana) were a number of factories famous for the

embroidery of damask<sup>1</sup> figured with gold and for curtains made of spun silk (khazz). Their camel- and goat-hair fabrics as well as their spun-silk cloaks were widely known. Shiraz yielded striped woollen cloaks, also gauzes and brocades. Under the name of taffeta" European ladies of the Middle

Ages bought in their native shops the Persian silken cloth taftah. Khurasan and Armenia were famous for their spreads, hangings and sofa and cushion covers. In Central Asia, that great emporium of the early Middle Ages, Bukhara was especially noted for its prayerrugs. A complete conception of the development of industry and trade in Transoxiana may be gained from the list of exports from the various towns given by al-Maqdisi:<sup>2</sup> soap, carpets, copper lamps, pewter ware, felt cloaks, furs, amber, honey, falcons, scissors, needles, knives, swords, bows, meats, Slavonic and Turkish slaves, etc. Tables, sofas, lamps, chandeliers, vases, earthenware and kitchen utensils were also made in Syria and Egypt- The Egyptian fabrics termed dimydti (after Dimyat), dablqt (after Dabiq) and tznnlsi (after Tinnis)<sup>3</sup> were world-renowned and imitated in Persia. The ancient industrial arts of Pharaonic days survived in an attenuated form in the manufactures of the Copts.

The glass of Sidon, Tyre and other Syrian towns, a survival of the ancient Phoenician industry which after the Egyptian was the oldest glass industry in history, was proverbial for its clarity and thinness.<sup>4</sup> In its enamelled and variegated varieties Syrian glass as a result of the Crusades became the forerunner of the stained glass in the cathedrals of Europe. Glass and metal vases of Syrian workmanship were in great demand as articles of utility and luxury. Sconces of glass bearing enamelled inscriptions in various colours hung in mosques and palaces. Damascus was the centre of an extensive mosaic and qdshdni industry. Qdshdni<sup>5</sup> (colloquial qlshan/f qash/i\ a name derived from Kashan <sup>6</sup> in Media, was given to square or hexagonal glazed tiles, sometimes figured with conventional flowers and used in exterior and



<sup>1</sup> This fabric was originally made in Damascus, whence the name.

<sup>2</sup> Pp- 323-6.

<sup>3</sup> Yaqut, vol. ii, pp. 603, 548, vol. i, p. 882; Maqdisi, pp. 201, 433, 11. 16-17, 443,

1. 5. See below, p. 631.

\* Tha'alibi, Lata'if, p. 95.

p <sup>6</sup><sub>79</sub> Mentioned in Ikn-Battutah, vol. i, p. 415, vol. ii, pp. 46, 130, 225, 297, vol. iii,

- Ar. Qashan; Yaqut, Buldan, vol. iv, p. 15.

interior decoration of buildings. The predominant colours were indigo blue, turquoise blue, green and less often red and yellow. The art, as ancient as the Elamites and Assyrians, survived in Damascus until the latter part of the eighteenth century.

Worthy of special note is the manufacture of writing-paper, introduced in the middle of the eighth century into Samarkand from China.<sup>1</sup> The paper of Samarkand, which was captured by the Moslems in 704, was considered matchless.<sup>2</sup> Before the close of that century Baghdad saw its first paper-mill. Gradually others for making paper followed: Egypt had its factory about 9<sup>00</sup> or earlier, Morocco about 1100, Spain about 1150; and various kinds of paper, white and coloured, were produced. Al-Mu'tasim, credited with opening new soap and glass factories in Baghdad, Samarra and other towns, is said to have encouraged the paper industry. The oldest Arabic paper manuscript that has come down to us is one on tradition entitled Gharib al-

Hadzth, by abu-'Ubayd al-Qasim ibn-Sallam (f 837), dated dhu-al-Qa'dah, A.H. 252 (November 13–December 12, 866) and preserved in the Leyden University Library.<sup>3</sup> The oldest by a Christian author is a theological treatise by abu-Qurrah<sup>4</sup> (\*j\* ca. 820) dated Rabi I, A.H. 264 (Nov. 11-Dec. 10, 877) and preserved in the British Museum. From Moslem Spain and from Italy, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the manufacture of paper finally worked its way into Christian Europe, where with the later discovery of printing from movable type (1450-55) it made possible the measure of popular education which Europe and America now enjoy.

The jeweller's art also had its day. Pearls, sapphires, rubies, emeralds and diamonds were favourites with the royalty; turquoise, carnelian and onyx with the lower classes. One of the best-known gems in Arab history is the big ruby, once owned by several Persian monarchs, on which Harun inscribed his name after acquiring it for 40,000 dinars.<sup>5</sup> The ruby was so large and brilliant that "if it were put in the night-time in a dark room it would shine like a lamp". Harun's sister, as we learned

<sup>1</sup> Consult Friedrich Hirth, *Chinesische Studien* (Munich and Leipzig, 1890), vol. i, pp. 259-71. See below, p. 414. Paper money, also of Chinese origin was printed (i 294) in Chinese and Arabic at Tibriz, one of the earliest places in the Moslem world with a record of block printing. 'Thal'alibi, p. 126; Maqdisi, p. 326 11. 3-4.

' William Wright, *The Palaographical Society, Oriental Series* (London, '87 Theodfrus^abu Kurra, *De Cullu Imaginum*, ed. and tr. I. Arendzen (Bonn 1897>-

• Mas'udi, vol. vii, p. 376- Cf. Fakhri, pp. 352'3; Jaban, vol. in, p. 602, 1. 12. before, wore jewels on her head-dress and his wife had them on her shoes. Yahya ibn-Khalid the Barmakid once offered 7,000,000 dirhams to a Baghdad merchant for a jewel-box made of precious stones, but the offer was refused.<sup>1</sup> Al-Muktafi is said to have left 20,000,000 dinars' worth of jewels and perfumes.<sup>2</sup> At a gorgeous royal banquet given by al-Mutawakkil, and considered together with al-Ma'mun's wedding "two occasions that have no third in Islam",<sup>3</sup> tables and trays of gold studded with gems were used. Even ibn-Khaldun, who claims that the 'Abbasids could not have indulged in luxurious modes of living, accepts the extraordinary display of gold and jewellery at al-Ma'mun's marriage ceremony.<sup>4</sup> According to al-Mas'udi,<sup>5</sup> al-Mu'tazz (866-9), the thirteenth 'Abbasid caliph, was the first to appear on horseback in gilded armour on a golden saddle, all caliphs before him having used silver decorations. One of the last caliphs to possess much jewellery was al-Muqtadir (908-32), who confiscated the property of the founder of the richest jewellery house in Baghdad<sup>6</sup> and came into possession of the famous red ruby of Harun, as well as the equally famous "unique pearl" weighing three mithqals (miskal) and other gems, all of which he squandered.<sup>7</sup>

The leading mineral resources of the empire which made the jeweller's industry possible included gold and silver from Khurasan, which also yielded marble and mercury;<sup>8</sup> rubies, lapis lazuli and azurite from Transoxiana;<sup>9</sup> lead and silver from Karman;<sup>10</sup> pearls from al-Bahrayn;<sup>11</sup> turquoise from Naysabur, whose mine in the latter half of the tenth century was farmed out for 758,720 dirhams a year;<sup>12</sup> carnelian from San'a';<sup>13</sup> and iron from Mt. Lebanon.<sup>14</sup> Other mineral resources included kaolin and marble from Tibriz,

antimony from the vicinity of Isbahan,<sup>15</sup> bitumen and naphtha from Georgia, marble and sulphur from

<sup>1</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, p. 703.      ' Tha'alibi, p. 72.      <sup>3</sup> Ibid. pp. 72-3.

<sup>4</sup> Mtiqaddamah, p. 15, 11. 20 seq., pp. 144-5.

\* Vol. vii, pp. 401-2, quoted by ibn-Khaldun, Mtiqaddamah, p. 15.

• Above, p. 344.

<sup>7</sup> Fakhri, p. 353. The "unique pearl" is also mentioned by ibn-Hawqal, p. 38,

1. 7. Cf. Maqdisi, p. 101, 1. 16.      <sup>3</sup> Maqdisi, p. 326. '

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. p. 303. "Lazuli", as well as "azure", comes through Latin from Ar. lazaward and ultimately from Pers, lazward.

<sup>10</sup> Ibn-al-Faqih, p. 206.      <sup>11</sup> Maqdisi, p. 101.      <sup>12</sup> Ibid. p. 341, n.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. p. 101.      <sup>14</sup> Ibid. p. 184, 1. 3.

<sup>16</sup> Tstakhri, p. 203; Tha'alibi, Latd'if, p. no. Ar. kuhl, perhaps "galena", consult H. E. Stapleton et al. in Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, vol. viii (1927), p. 352.

Syria-Palestine,<sup>1</sup> asbestos from Transoxiana<sup>2</sup> and mercury, pitch and tar from Farghânah.<sup>3</sup>

Agriculture received great impetus under the early 'Abbasids because their capital itself lay in a most favoured spot, the <sup>ture</sup> alluvial plain commonly known under

the name of al-Sawad; because they realized that farming was the chief source of the state income; and because the tilling of the land was almost wholly in the hands of the native inhabitants, whose status was somewhat improved under the new régime. Deserted farms and ruined villages in different parts of the empire were gradually rehabilitated and restored. The lower region of the Tigris-Euphrates valley, the richest in the whole empire after Egypt and the traditional site of the garden of Eden, was the object of special attention on the part of the central government. Canals from the Euphrates, either old and now re-opened or else entirely new, formed a “veritable network”.<sup>4</sup> The first great canal, called Nahr Tsa after a relative of al-Mansür who had reexcavated it, connected the Euphrates at al-Anbar in the northwest with the Tigris at Baghdad. One of the main branches of the Nahr Tsa was the Sarah. The second great transverse canal was the Nahr Sarsar, which entered the Tigris above al-Madâ in. The third was the Nahr al-Malik (“river of the king”), which flowed into the Tigris below al-Mada in.<sup>5</sup> Lower down the two rivers came the Nahr Kütha and the Great Sarah, which threw off a number of irrigation channels. Another canal, the Dujayl (diminutive of Dijlah, the Tigris), which originally connected the Tigris with the Euphrates, had become silted up by the tenth century, and the name was given to a new channel, a loop canal, which started from the Tigris below al-Qâdisiyyah and rejoined it farther south after sending off a number of branches. Other less important canals included the Nahr al-Silah dug in Wâsit by al-Mahdi.<sup>8</sup> Arab geographers speak of caliphs “digging” or “opening” “rivers”, when in most cases the process involved was one of re-digging or re-opening canals that had existed since

i Maqdisi, p. 184.  
Hawqal, p. 362.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 303, 11. 13-15-

’ Ibn-

< Iṣṭakhri, p. 85, 1. 3; ibn-Hawqal, p. 166, 1. 2.

» For these canals see Istakhri, pp. 84-5; same in ibn-Hawqal, pp. 165-6; Maqdisi, p. 124; Khatib, Tarikh, vol. i, pp. 9b <sup>111</sup> W-î <sup>Guî</sup> Le Strange, "Description of Mesopotamia and Baghdad, written about the year 900 A.D. by Ibn-Serap<sub>4</sub>on' (Suhrâb), Journal, Royal Asiatic Society (1895}, PP-255'3<sup>15</sup>- ..

‘ <sup>6</sup> Yâqût, vol. iii, pp. 377-8.      <sup>7</sup> Iṣṭakhri, pp. 77-8; Yâqût, vol. 11, p. 555.

• Balâdhuri, p. 29i = Hitti, p. 451; Qudâmah, p. 241.

Babylonian days. In al-'Iraq as well as Egypt the task consisted mainly in keeping the ancient systems in order. Even before the first World War, when the Ottoman government commissioned Sir William Willcocks to study the irrigation problem of al-'Iraq, his report stressed the necessity of clearing the old watercourses rather than constructing new ones.<sup>7</sup> It should be noted, however, that the face of the alluvial Sawad has greatly changed since 'Abbasid days and that both the Tigris and the Euphrates have considerably shifted their courses in historical times.

The staple crops of al-'Iraq consisted of barley and wheat, rice, dates, sesame, cotton and flax. Especially fertile was the alluvial plain to the south, al-Sawad, where quantities of fruit and vegetables, both of the cold and the hot regions, were grown. Nuts, oranges, egg-plants, sugar-cane, lupines and such flowers as roses and violets were produced in abundance.

Khurasan vied with al-'Iraq and Egypt as a rich agricultural country. A review of the revenue sheets discussed above<sup>8</sup>

would indicate that it yielded one of the largest kharajs of the empire. Politically it embraced, at least for some time, Transoxiana and Sijistan, and was therefore a great source of man-power as well. No wonder, then, that we hear it referred to in the presence of al-Ma'mun as "the whole empire".<sup>9</sup>

The land round Bukhara, in the judgment of Arab geographers, was, especially under the Samanids in the 900's, a veritable garden.<sup>10</sup> Here, between Samarqand and Bukhara, lay the Wadi al-Sughd (the valley of Sogdiana), one of the "four earthly paradises", the other three being the Shi'b Bawwan (gap of Bawan in Faris), the gardens of the Ubullah Canal, extending from al-Basrah to the south-east,<sup>11</sup> and the orchards (ghutaji) of Damascus.<sup>12</sup> In these gardens flourished several varieties of fruits, vegetables and flowers, such as dates, apples, apricots,<sup>7</sup> peaches, plums, lemons, oranges, figs, grapes, olives, almonds, pomegranates, egg-plants, radishes, cucumbers, roses and basil {rayhan}. Water-melons were exported from Khwarizm to the courts of al-Ma'mun and al-Wathiq in lead moulds packed with ice; such fruit would sell in Baghdad for seven hundred dirhams each.<sup>1</sup> In fact most of the fruit trees and vegetables grown at present in Western Asia were known at the time, with the exception of mangoes, potatoes, tomatoes and similar plants introduced in recent times from the New World and distant European colonies. The orange tree, allied to the citron and lemon, had its native habitat in India or Malay, whence it spread at this time into Western Asia, the adjoining lands of the Mediterranean basin and eventually through the Arabs in Spain into Europe.<sup>2</sup> The sugar-cane plantations of Faris and al-Ahwaz,<sup>3</sup> with their noted refineries, were about this time followed by similar ones on the Syrian coast, from which place the Crusaders later introduced the cane and the sugar<sup>4</sup> into Europe. Thus did this sweet commodity, probably of Bengalese origin, which

has since become an indispensable ingredient in the daily food of civilized man, work its way westward.

Horticulture was not limited to fruits and vegetables. The cultivation of flowers was also promoted, not only in small home gardens round fountains musical with jetting, splashing water, but on a large scale for commercial purposes. The preparation of perfumes or essences from roses, water-lilies, oranges, violets and the like flourished in Damascus, Shiraz, Jur and other towns. The whole district of Jur, or Firuzabad, in Faris was noted for its attar (Ar. V/r) of red roses.<sup>5</sup> Rose-water from Jur was exported as far as China eastward and al-Maghrib westward.<sup>6</sup> Faris included in its kharaj 30,000 bottles of the essence of red roses, which were sent annually to the caliph in Baghdad.<sup>7</sup> Sabur (Pers. Shapur) and its valley produced ten world-famous varieties of perfumed oils, or unguents, extracted from the violet, water-lily, narcissus, palm flower, iris, white lily, myrtle, sweet marjoram, lemon and orange flowers.<sup>8</sup> Among

<sup>1</sup> Tha'alibi, p. 129.

<sup>2</sup> This is the bitter variety, Ar. abu-sufayr. Eng. "orange" comes through Sp. from Ar. tiaranj, from Pers, ndrang. "Lemon" is Ar. laymun, Pers, limun (see below, p. 665).

<sup>3</sup> Tha'alibi, p. 107.

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<sup>4</sup> Ar. sukkar', "candy" comes from Ar. qandah, qandt, which is Pers. qand. "Cane" is also of Semitic origin corresponding to Ar. qanah, reed, but was separately introduced into European languages.

<sup>6</sup> In Syria red roses are still called wardjurt.

• Ibn-Hawqal, p. 213; Ištakhri, pp. 152-3.



' Tha'alibi, pp. 109-10.

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these the violet extract was the most popular in the Moslem world, as the following words put in the mouth of the Prophet would indicate: "The excellence of the extract of violets above all other extracts is as the excellence of me above all the rest of creation".<sup>1</sup>

Among flowers the rose seems to have been the favourite. In the opinion of the cultured slave girl Tawaddud, whose ideas may be taken as an index of popular opinion between the tenth and twelfth centuries, roses and violets are the best scents; pomegranate and citron the best fruits; and endive the best vegetable.<sup>2</sup> The popular esteem in which the rose is held found expression in a tradition ascribed to Muhammad: "The white rose was created from my sweat on the night of the nocturnal journey [mi raj], the red rose from the sweat of Gabriel and the yellow rose from that of al-Buraq".<sup>3</sup> With the words "I am the king of sultans and the rose is the king of the sweet-scented flowers; each of us therefore is worthy of the other", al-Muta-wakkil is said to have so monopolized the cultivation of roses for his own enjoyment that in his time that flower could be seen nowhere except in his palace.<sup>4</sup>

The rose and the violet had a rival in the myrtle. "Adam was hurled down from Paradise with three things", claims a Prophetic tradition: "a myrtle tree, which is the chief of sweet-scented plants in the world; an ear of wheat, which is the chief food of the world; and a date, which is the chief of the fruits of this world.\*"<sup>5</sup> Other highly desired flowers were the narcissus, gillyflower, jasmine, poppy and safflower.

As an index of interest in agriculture mention might be made of the several books on plants, including translations from Greek, listed in the Fihrist\* the few books on attar<sup>7</sup> and the spurious work of ibn-Wahshlyah entitled al-Fildhah al-Nabatlyah.

### Dhimmis: Christians

The agricultural class, who constituted the bulk of the population of the empire and its chief source of revenue, were the original inhabitants of the land, now reduced to the position of

<sup>1</sup> Suyuti, Husn, vol. ii, p. 242.

<sup>1</sup> y[If Laylah wa-Laylah {Thousand and One Nights'}, no. 453\* Cf. nos. 864, 865.

\* Suyuti, Husn, vol. ii, p. 236.

<sup>4</sup> Nawaji, p. 235; Suyuti, vol. ii, p. 236.

<sup>1</sup> Suyuti, vol. ii, p. 245. Consult Edward W. Lane, The Thousand and One Nights, vol. i (London, 1839), pp. 219 seq. (in n. 22 to ch. iii).

<sup>4</sup> P. 78, 11. 12, 23, p. 79, 1. 3, p. 83, 1. 16, p. 252, 11. 9-10.

' Fihrist, p. 317.

dhimmis. The Arab considered it below his dignity to engage in agricultural pursuits. Originally Scripturaries, viz. Christians, Jews and Sabians, the dhimmis had their status widened, as we learned before, to include Zoroastrians, Manichaeans, Harran Sabians and others—all of whom were now treated on a par with those with whom a compact for religious tolerance had been made. In country places and on

their farms these dhimmis clung to their ancient cultural patterns and preserved their native languages: Aramaic and Syriac in Syria and al-Traq, Iranian in Persia and Coptic in Egypt. Many of those who embraced Islam moved to the cities.

Even in cities Christians and Jews often held important financial, clerical and professional positions. This often led to open jealousy on the part of the Moslem populace and found expression in official enactments. But most of this discriminating legislation remained “ink on paper” and was not consistently enforced.

The first caliph, as we have seen, to order Christians and Jews to don distinctive dress and to exclude them from public offices was the pious Umayyad, 'Umar II, whose pact has often been erroneously ascribed to 'Umar I. Among the 'Abbasids Harun was evidently the first to re-enact some of the old measures. In 807 he ordered all churches in borderlands, together with those erected subsequent to the Moslem conquest, demolished and commanded members of the tolerated sects to wear the prescribed garb.<sup>13</sup> The stringent regulations against dhimmis culminated in the time of al-Mutawakkil, who in 850 and 854 decreed that Christians and Jews should affix wooden images of devils to their houses, level their graves even with the ground, wear outer garments of honey-colour, i.e. yellow, put two honeycoloured patches on the wear of their slaves, one sewn on the back and the other on the front, and ride only on mules and asses with wooden saddles marked by two pomegranate-like balls on the cantie.<sup>14</sup> It was on account of this distinctive dress that the dhimmi acquired the epithet “spotted”.<sup>15</sup> One other grave disability under which the dhimmis laboured was a ruling of the Moslem jurists of the period that the testimony of a

Christian or a Jew could not be accepted against a Moslem; for the Jews and Christians had once corrupted the text of their scripture, as the Koran charges,<sup>1</sup> and therefore could no more be trusted. The last caliph to renew in an aggravated form the hostile measures against dhimmis was the Fâtimid al-Hâkim (996-1021).

That in spite of these restrictions the Christians under the caliphs enjoyed on the whole a large measure of toleration may be inferred from several episodes. A number of religious debates similar to those staged in the presence of Mu'âwiyah and 'Abd-al-Malik were held in the presence of the 'Abbâsids. The text of an apology for Christianity delivered in 781 by Timothy, patriarch of the Nestorians, before al-Mahdi has come down to us,<sup>2</sup> as has also the famous treatise by al-Kindi<sup>3</sup> professing to be a contemporary account of a controversy held about 819 before al-Ma'mûn on the comparative merits of Islam and Christianity. The religious discussions of 'Ali al-Tabari (f ca. 854) in his *Kitab al-Din zv-al-Dawlah* a semi-official defence and exposition of Islam written at the court with the assistance of al-Mutawakkil, is temperate, singularly free from heat and passion and abounds in references to the Bible, evidently the Syriac version or its early Arabic translation. At the time al-Nadim wrote his *Fihrist* (988) both the Old and New Testaments were already in existence in Arabic in more than one version.<sup>5</sup> In fact we are told that a certain Ahmad ibn-'Abdullâh ibn-Salâm had translated the Bible into Arabic as early as the days of Hârûn.<sup>6</sup> There is evidence to show that even in the latter part of the seventh century parts of the Bible had been rendered into Arabic either from Syriac or from the Greek Septuagint. Al-Tabari<sup>7</sup> notes under A.H. 61 that 'Abdullah, son of the conqueror of Egypt, had read the Book of Daniel. But the first important Arabic translation of the Old Testament was that of Sa'id al-Fayyumi (Saadia

Gaon, 882-942) of Egypt, which has remained to this day the version for all Arabic-speaking Jews. These translations aroused the interest of Moslems in the controversial points, and we find al-Jahiz (f 869) among the many

<sup>1</sup> Sûrs. 2 : 70, 5 : 16-18.

<sup>2</sup> A. Mingana in Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, vol. J 2 (Manchester, 1928), pp. 137-298.

<sup>3</sup> Risâlat ' Abd-al-Masih (London, 1870), 2nd ed. (London, 1885).

<sup>4</sup> Ed. A. Mingana (Cairo, 1923); tr. Mingana, The Book of Religion and Empire

(Manchester, 1922).  
23.

<sup>6</sup> Fihrist, p.

• Ibid. p. 22. This may have been a partial translation. ' Vol. ii, p. 399. who penned answers to Christians. We even read of Christian vizirs in the latter half of the ninth century, such as 'Abdun ibn-Sa'id, in whose honour a judge in Baghdad rose up in public, thus receiving the disapproval of the spectators.<sup>16</sup> Al-Muttaqi (940-44) had a Christian vizir,<sup>17</sup> as did one of the Buwayhids.<sup>18</sup> Al-Mu'tadid (892-902) had a Christian as head of the war office.<sup>19</sup> Such Christian high officials received the usual marks of honour, for we find certain Moslems objecting to kissing their hands. Most of the personal physicians of the caliphs, as will be remembered, were members of the Nestorian church. A recently published charter of protection granted to the Nestorians in 1138 by al-Muktafi<sup>20</sup> throws fresh light on the cordial relations between official Islam and official Christianity in that period.

The Christian subjects of the 'Abbasid caliphs belonged for the most part to the two Syrian churches considered heterodox<sup>20</sup> and commonly called Jacobite and Nestorian, with the Nestorians predominant in al-Traql. The Nestorian patriarch or catholicos (corrupted into Ar. jat hallq, jat hallq') had the right of residence in Baghdad, a privilege which the Jacobites had always sought in vain. Round the patriarchate styled Dayr al-Rum<sup>21</sup> (the monastery of the Romans, i.e. Christians) there grew in Baghdad a Christian quarter called Dar (abode of) al-Rum. Under the catholicos' jurisdiction there flourished seven metropolitans, including those of al-Basrah, al-Mawsil and Naslbin (Nisibis), each with two or three bishops under him. The patriarch-elect received his investiture from the caliph, by whom he was recognized as the official head of all Christians in the empire. In 912-13 the catholicos succeeded in making the caliph prevent the Jacobite patriarch, whose seat was Antioch, from transferring his residence to Baghdad.<sup>22</sup> The main political charge against the Jacobites was that they sympathized with the Byzantines. But the Jacobites had a monastery in Baghdad<sup>23</sup> and a metropolitan seat in Takrit, not far from the capital. In all, Yâqût<sup>24</sup> lists half a dozen monasteries in east Baghdad, apart from those on the west side.

The Copts of Egypt, as we have noted before, belonged to the Jacobite communion. The Nubian church was likewise Jacobite and acknowledged the primacy of the patriarch of Alexandria. Along the narrow coast west of Egypt, Christianity had a following among the Berbers, but the majority of the inland population had their local cults corresponding to their tribal divisions.

One of the most remarkable features of Christianity under the caliphs was its possession of enough vitality to make it an aggressive church, sending its missionaries as far as India

and China. Al-Nadim<sup>25</sup> reports an interesting interview which he himself held with one such missionary returned from China, whom he met in the Christian quarter<sup>26</sup> of Baghdad. The famous stela at Sian Fu, China, erected in 781 to commemorate the names and labours of sixty-seven Nestorian missionaries,<sup>27</sup> together with the affiliation of the Christian church in India, that of the “Christians of St. Thomas” in Malabar on the southwest coast, with the patriarchate in Baghdad, bear witness to the evangelistic zeal of the East Syrian Church under the Moslems. It is also recognized that the existing characters of Mongol and Manchu are lineal descendants of the original Uighurian forms, which were certainly derived from the Syriac alphabet as used by the Nestorians.

## Jews

As one of the “protected” peoples the Jews fared on the whole even better than the Christians, and that in spite of several unfavourable references in the Koran.<sup>28</sup> They were fewer and did not therefore present such a problem. In 985 al-Maqdisi<sup>29</sup> found most of the money-changers and bankers in Syria to be Jews, and most of the clerks and physicians Christians. Under several caliphs, particularly al-Mu'tadid (892-902), we read of more than one Jew in the capital and the provinces assuming responsible state positions. In Baghdad itself the Jews maintained a good-sized colony<sup>1</sup> which continued to flourish until the fall of the city. Benjamin of Tudela,<sup>2</sup> who visited the colony about 1169, found it in possession of ten rabbinical schools and twenty-three<sup>3</sup> synagogues; the principal one, adorned with variegated marble, was richly ornamented with gold and silver. Benjamin depicts in glowing colours the high esteem in which the head of the Babylonian Jews was held as a descendant of David and head of the community (Aram, résh

gdlütha, prince of captivity<sup>4</sup> or exilarch), in fact as chief of all Jews owing allegiance to the Baghdad caliphate. Just as the catholicos exercised a certain measure of jurisdiction over all Christians in the empire, so did the exilarch over his co-religionists. The “prince of captivity” seems to have lived in affluence and owned gardens, houses and rich plantations. On his way to an audience with the caliph he appeared dressed in embroidered silk, wore a white turban gleaming with gems and was accompanied by a retinue of horsemen. Ahead of him marched a herald calling out: “Make way before our lord the son of David!”

The Mandeans,<sup>5</sup> the genuine Sábians<sup>6</sup> of Arabic writers, were Sabians a Judaeo-Christian sect who also called themselves Nasoraié d'Yahya, the Nasoreans<sup>7</sup> (i.e. the observants) of St. John, and therefore became erroneously known to the modern world as the Christians of St. John (the Baptist). The Mandeans practised the rite of baptism after birth, before marriage and on various other occasions. They inhabited the lower plains of Babylonia, and as a sect they go back to the first century after Christ. Palestine was perhaps the original home of this and other baptist communities. Their language, Mandaic, is a dialect of Aramaic and its script bears close resemblance to the Nabataean and Palmyrene. Mentioned thrice in the Koran, these Babylonian Sábians acquired a dhimmi status and were classified by

<sup>1</sup> Yáqüt, vol. iv, p. 1045.

<sup>1</sup> The Itinerary of Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela, tr. and ed. A. Asher, vol. i (London and Berlin, 1840), pp. 100-105.

<sup>3</sup> Other contemporaneous travellers make the number only three, which is more credible.



<sup>4</sup> Some of the Baghdad Jews might well have been the descendants of those carried into exile by Nebuchadnezzar in 597 and 586 B.C.

<sup>5</sup> This word is derived from Aramaic yada , to know; the sect was Gnostic.

<sup>8</sup> Ar. Sabi'ah, or Sábi'ün, sing. Sabi' from Mandaic (Aram.) Sabi', immerser; no etymological connection with Saba', the name of the great people in southwestern Arabia.

<sup>7</sup> Wrongly rendered Nazarenes, i.e. Christians.

Moslems as a “protected” sect. According to the Fihrist<sup>30</sup> they included the mughtasilah (those who wash themselves), who occupied the marshes of lower al-'Iraq. The community still survives to the number of five thousand in the swampy lands near al-Basrah. Living in the neighbourhood of rivers is necessitated by the fact that immersion in flowing water is an essential, and certainly the most characteristic, feature of their religious practice. In modern Baghdad the Sabians are represented by the so-called 'Amarah silversmiths, makers of the mlina <sup>31</sup> work.

Quite distinct from these Babylonian Sabians were the pseudo-Sabians of Harran.<sup>3</sup> Arab writers confuse the two. The Harran Sabians were in reality star-worshippers who under the Moslems adopted the name “Sabians” to secure the advantages of toleration accorded by the Koran. This name has stuck to them ever since, and the curious sect continued to flourish close to the headquarters of the caliphate until the middle of the thirteenth century, when the Mongols destroyed their last temple. Undoubtedly the intellectual merits and scientific services of some of its illustrious men helped to gain Moslem protection.<sup>4</sup> Reference has already been made to Thabit ibn-Qurrah and

other great Harranian astronomers. Thabit's son Sinan was forced by the Caliph al-Qahir to embrace Islam.<sup>5</sup> Among other Sabian luminaries were abu-Ishaq ibn-Hilal al-Sabi', secretary of both al-Muti' (946-74) and al-Ta'i' (974-91); al-Battani, the astronomer; ibn-Wahshiyah (fl. ca. 900), pseudoauthor of the book on Nabataean agriculture; and possibly Jabir ibn-Hayyan, the alchemist. The last three professed Islam.<sup>6</sup>

### Magians and other dualists

The Zoroastrians [Majus], mentioned only once in the Koran (22 : 17), could not have been included among the Scripturaries in Muhammad's mind. But in the hadith and by Moslem legists they are treated as such; the term "Sabians" was interpreted to cover them. Practical politics and expediency, as we learned before, made it necessary that the dhimmi status be accorded such a large body of population as that which occupied Iran. After the conquest Zoroastrianism, which was the state religion, continued to exist and its fire-temples remained standing not only in all the Iranian provinces but in al-Traq, India and places east of Persia.<sup>1</sup> The Zoroastrians in India are still represented by the Parsis,<sup>2</sup> whose ancestors emigrated from Persia early in the eighth century. Zoroastrianism yielded a number of distinguished converts to Islam, the earliest among whom was ibn-al-Muqafifa\*. Certain phases of early Islamic theology were either a reaction against dualism or an imitation of its attitudes.

The Manichaeans, at first mistaken by the Moslems for Christians or Zoroastrians, obtained later the status of a tolerated community. The Persian Mani (f A.D. 273 or 274) and his teaching seem to have held a special fascination for the followers of Muhammad, for we see that both al-Mahdi and al-Hadi issued strict measures against the tendency in

that direction. Even the last Umayyad caliph, whose tutor was put to death as a zindiq, was suspected of Manichaeism.<sup>3</sup> In 780 al-Mahdi crucified a number of crypto-Manichaeans in Aleppo,<sup>4</sup> and during the last two years of his reign instituted an inquisition against them in Baghdad.<sup>5</sup> Al-Hadi continued the persecution begun by his predecessor.<sup>6</sup> Al-Rashid likewise appointed a special officer to conduct an inquisition against such dualists.<sup>7</sup> But many Manichaeans and even communistic Mazdakites<sup>8</sup> seem to have survived. And although the Koran<sup>9</sup> entitles idol worshippers to no consideration, practical Islam connived at minor communities in Northern Africa and Central Asia which were too insignificant to attract public attention, and found it impossible to exterminate paganism in India.

The so-called "Moslem conquests" which were effected The mainly under the orthodox caliphs were in reality, as noted Islamiz»-

7 r J tion of th<

<sup>1</sup> Mas'udi, vol. iv, p. 86.

empire

<sup>2</sup> Name derived from Pars (Fars), modern Faris. See above, p. 157, n. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Fihrist, pp. 337-8. Early Arab writers applied the term zindiq (from Pahlawi zandik} to any Moslem whose religious ideas partook of the dogmatic conceptions of the Persians in general and the Manichaeans in particular. In later usage zindiq came to mean any person with liberal views, a free-thinker. Cf. E. G. Browne, A Literary History of Persia, vol.i (New York, 1902), pp. 159-60. Cf. above, p. 84, n. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, p. 499.      \* Ibid. pp. 519-20, 588.      \*  
Ibid. pp. 548-51.

<sup>7</sup> Arabic sources including Fihrist, pp. 327 seq., Shahrastani, pp. 188 seq., and Ya'qubi, vol. i, pp. 180-82, are among the oldest and best we have on Manichaeism. For a modern treatment consult A. V. Williams Jackson, *Researches in Manichaeism* (New York, 1932).

<sup>8</sup> See Tabari, vol. i, pp. 885-6, 897; Shahrastani, pp. 192 seq., Browne, vol. i, pp. 166-72.      \* Surs. 4 : 116-20, 21 : 98-100, 66 : 9. before, the conquest of Arab arms and Arab nationals. They netted the military and political subjugation of Persia, the Fertile Crescent and north-eastern Africa. During the first century of 'Abbasid rule the conquests entered upon their second stage, the victory of Islam as a religion. It was in the course of this stage that the bulk of the population of the empire was converted to the new religion. Many conversions were, to be sure, concurrent with the early military conquests, but such a country as Syria continued to present the aspect of a Christian land throughout the whole Umayyad period. The situation now, however, began perceptibly to change. The intolerant legislation of al-Rashid and al-Mutawakkil undoubtedly contributed its quota of fresh converts. Cases of individual and collective forcible conversion added to their numbers; five thousand of the Christian banu-Tanukh whom al-Mahdi saw near Aleppo responded to his orders and embraced Islam.<sup>32</sup> But the process of conversion in its normal working was more gradual and peaceful, though also inescapable. Self-interest dictated it. To escape the payment of the humiliating tribute and other disabilities, to secure social prestige or political influence, to enjoy a larger measure of freedom and security, these were the strong motives in operation.

Persia remained unconverted to Islam until well into the third century after its inclusion in the Arab empire. It counts among its population today some 9000 Zoroastrians. The population of northern al-Iraq early in the tenth century was still, in the opinion of ibn-al-Faqih,<sup>33</sup> "Moslem in name but Christian in character". Mt. Lebanon has maintained until the present day a Christian majority. Egypt, which had embraced Christianity but very lightly in the fourth century, proved one of the easiest countries to Islamize. Its Copts today form but a small minority. The Nubian kingdom, which had been Christianized in the middle of the sixth century, was still Christian in the twelfth century<sup>34</sup> and even in the latter part of the fourteenth.<sup>35</sup> The conversion to Islam of the Berbers and North Africans, whose church, as we have before noted, had produced several illustrious champions of Christian orthodoxy, was begun with no marked success by \*Uqbah after the founding of al-Qayrawan in 670 as a permanent base of military operation and centre of Islamic influence. It was carried out in the following century according to a new plan of enlisting the Berbers in the Moslem army and thus winning them over by the new prospects of booty. The Berbers formed the nucleus of the armed forces which completed the conquest of West Africa and effected the subjugation of Spain. But even in their case we find three centuries after the Arab conquest some forty bishoprics left<sup>36</sup> of the church which once comprised five hundred. Here the final triumph of Islam was not achieved till the twelfth century, though certain Kabyls (from Ar. qabail, tribes) of Algeria had the Andalusian Moors, driven out after the fall of Granada in 1492, to thank for their conversion.

The third stage in the series of conquests was the linguistic The one: the victory of the Arabic tongue over the native languages of the subjugated peoples. This was the latest

and slowest, it was in this field of struggle that the subject races presented the greatest measure of resistance. They proved, as is often the case, more ready to give up their political and even religious loyalties than their linguistic ones. The complete victory of Arabic as the language of common usage was not assured until the latter part of the 'Abbasid period. In Persia Arabic became for some time after the military conquest the language of learning and society, but it never succeeded in displacing permanently the Iranian speech. In al-'Iraq and Syria the transition from one Semitic tongue, the Aramaic, to another, the Arabic, was of course easier. In the out-of-the-way places, however, such as the Lebanons with their preponderant Christian population, the native Syriac put up a desperate fight and has lingered until modern times. Indeed Syriac is still spoken in Ma'lula and two other villages in Anti-Lebanon. With its disappearance Aramaic has left in the colloquial Arabic unmistakable traces noticeable in vocabulary, accent and grammatical structure.<sup>37</sup>

Arabic as the language of learning, it should be noted, won

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its day before Arabic as the vernacular. In the preceding chapter we have seen how fresh streams of thought from Byzantium, Persia and India resulted in a new concentration of culture in the 800's in Baghdad, al-Basrah and al-Kufah, comparable only to that of Alexandria in earlier times, and rendered Arabic, never used before for scientific purposes, the vehicle of the Moslem civilization. We shall now proceed to trace that cultural movement.

## CHAPTER XXVII

THE epoch of translation (ca. 750-850), discussed in a previous chapter (XXIV), was followed by one of creative activity; for the Arabs not only assimilated the ancient lore of Persia and the classical heritage of Greece but adapted both to their own peculiar needs and ways of thinking. In medicine and philosophy their independent work was less conspicuous than in alchemy, astronomy, mathematics and geography. In law, theology, philology and linguistics as Arabs and Moslems they carried on original thinking and research. Their translations, transmuted in no small degree by the Arab mind during the course of several centuries, were transmitted, together with many new contributions, to Europe through Syria, Spain and Sicily and laid the basis of that canon of knowledge which dominated medieval European thought. And transmission, from the standpoint of the history of culture, is no less essential than origination, for had the researches of Aristotle, Galen and Ptolemy been lost to posterity the world would have been as poor as if they had never been produced.

The line of demarcation between translated and original work in Medicine is not always clearly drawn. Many of the translators were also contributors. Such was the case with Yûhanna ibn-Mâsawayh (777-857) and Hunayn ibn-Ishâq (809-73). The former, a Christian physician and pupil of Jibril ibn-Bakhtîshû', failing to obtain human subjects for dissection, a practice which was never encouraged by Islam, had recourse to apes, one of which came from Nubia in 836 as a present to al-Mu'tasim.<sup>1</sup> Under these conditions little progress was made in the science of anatomy, except possibly in studying the anatomical structure of the eye. The prevalence of eye diseases in the sunny climate of al-'Iraq and other Moslem lands concentrated early medical attention on this subject. From the pen of ibn-Mâsawayh we

have the oldest systematic treatise on ophthalmology extant in Arabic.<sup>38</sup> A book entitled al- As hr Maqalat fi al-Ayn (the ten treatises on the eye) and ascribed to his pupil Hunayn ibn-Ishaq has recently been published with an English translation<sup>39</sup> as the earliest existing text-book of ophthalmology.

Arab interest in the curative science found expression in the Prophetic tradition that made science twofold: theology and medicine. The physician was at the same time metaphysician, philosopher and sage, and the title hakim was indifferently applied to him in all these capacities. The case of the Nestorian Jibril ibn-Bakhtishu' (f ca. 830), who was court physician of al-Rashid, al-Ma'mun and the Barmakids and is said to have amassed a fortune of 88,800,000 dirhams,<sup>40</sup> shows that the medical profession was a paying one. As private physician of al-Rashid Jibril received, we are told, 100,000 dirhams for bleeding the caliph twice a year and an equal sum for administering a semiannual purgative draught. The Bakhtishu' family produced six or seven generations of distinguished physicians, the last of whom flourished in the second half of the eleventh century.

In the curative use of drugs some remarkable advances were made at this time by the Arabs. It was they who established the first apothecary shops, founded the earliest school of pharmacy and produced the first pharmacopoeia. Several pharmacological treatises were composed, beginning with those of the world-famed Jabir ibn-Hayyan, the father of Arabic alchemy, who flourished about 776. As early as the days of al-Ma'mun and al-Mu'tasim pharmacists had to pass



some kind of examination.<sup>41</sup> Like druggists, physicians also were required to submit to a test. Following a case of malpractice Sinan ibn-Thabit ibn-Qurrah was ordered by al-Muqtadir in 931 to examine all practising physicians and grant certificates (sing. ijazaji) only to those who satisfied him. Over eight hundred and sixty such men in Baghdad passed the test and the capital rid itself of its quacks.<sup>42</sup> On the orders of al-Muqtadir's virtuous vizir 'Ali ibn-Tsa, Sinan organized a staff of physicians who would go from place to place carrying drugs and administering relief to ailing people. Other physicians made daily visits to jails.<sup>1</sup> Such facts show an intelligent interest in public hygiene unknown to the rest of the world at that time. In his efforts to raise the scientific standard of the medical profession and in his efficient administration of the Baghdad hospital lay Sinan's chief title to fame. This hospital, the first in Islam, was created by Harun al-Rashid at the beginning of the ninth century, following the Persian model, as the Arabic name blmaristan<sup>2</sup> indicates. Not long afterwards other hospitals to the number of thirty-four grew up throughout the Moslem world. Cairo saw its first hospital under ibn-Tulun<sup>3</sup> about 872, an institution which survived until the fifteenth century. Travelling clinics made their appearance in the eleventh century. Moslem hospitals had special wards for women and each had its own dispensary. Some were equipped with medical libraries and offered courses in medicine.

The most notable medical authors who followed the epoch of 'Ali the great translators were Persian in nationality but Arab in al-faban language: 'Ali al-Tabari, al-Razi, 'Ali ibn-al-'Abbas al-Majusi and ibn-Sina. The portraits of two of these, al-Razi and ibn-Sina, adorn the great hall of the School of Medicine at the University of Paris.

. 'Ali ibn-Sahh Rabban al-Tabari, who flourished in the middle of the ninth century, was originally a Christian from Tabaristan, as he tells us in his *Kitab al-Din* and as his father's name indicates.<sup>4</sup> In the reign of al-Mutawakkil he turned Moslem and became a physician to the caliph himself, under whom he produced in 850 his *Firdaws al-Hikmah* (paradise of wisdom), one of the oldest Arabic compendiums of medicine. This work includes to some extent philosophy and astronomy and is based on Greek and Hindu sources. After 'Ali the distinguished theologian-philosopher and physician al-Razi flourished.

Abu-Bakr Muhammad ibn-Zakariya' al-Razi (Rhazes, 865- Al-Razi 925), so called after the place of his birth, al-Rayy, not far from Tihiran, the capital of modern Persia, was probably "the greatest

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. i, p. 221; Qifli, pp. 193-4.

<sup>1</sup> Pers, bimar, sick + start, place of.  
Duqmaq, pt. iv, p. 99.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-

<sup>4</sup> Pp. 124-5 = *^ ^ of Religion*, p. 147. See also *Fihrist*, p. 296; cf. *ibn-Khallikan*, vol. ii, p. 503, 1. 25. "Rabban" in his father's name, which made scholars think that he was of Jewish origin, is obviously Syriac for "our master", as Ali explains in his introduction to *Firdaws al-Hikmah fi al-Tibb*, ed. Muhammad Z. Siddiqi (Berlin, 1928).

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and most original of all the Muslim physicians, and one of the most prolific as an author".<sup>43</sup> In selecting a new site for the great hospital<sup>44</sup> at Baghdad, of which he was chief physician, he is said to have hung up shreds of meat in different places, choosing the spot where they showed the

least signs of putrefaction.<sup>45</sup> He is also considered the inventor of the seton in surgery. The Fihrist\* lists one hundred and thirteen major and twenty-eight minor works by al-Razi, of which twelve deal with alchemy. One of his principal works on alchemy, the Kitab al-Asrar (the book of secrets), after having passed through numerous editorial hands was rendered into Latin by the eminent translator Gerard of Cremona (f 1187) and became a chief source of chemical knowledge until superseded in the fourteenth century by Jabir's (Geber's) works. Under the title *De spiritibus et corporibus* it was quoted by Roger Bacon. While still in Persia al-Razi wrote for Mansur ibn-Ishaq al-Samani of Sijistan a monumental work in ten volumes, named after his patron Kitab al-Tibb al-Mansuri, of which a Latin translation (*Liber Almansoris*) was first published in Milan in the eighties of the fifteenth century. Parts of it have been recently done into French and German. Of his monographs one of the best known is a treatise on smallpox and measles (*al-Jud ar i w-al-Hasbah*) the earliest of its kind and rightly considered an ornament to the medical literature of the Arabs. In it we find the first clinical account of smallpox.<sup>46</sup>

Translated into Latin in Venice (1565) and later into several modern languages, this treatise served to establish al-Razi's reputation as one of the keenest original thinkers and greatest clinicians not only of Islam but of the Middle Ages. His most important work, however, was al-Hawi (the comprehensive book), first translated into Latin under the auspices of Charles I of Anjou by the Sicilian Jewish physician Faraj ben-Salim in 1279. Under the title *Continens* it was repeatedly printed from 1486 onwards, a fifth edition appearing in Venice in 1542. As the name indicates, this book was meant to be encyclopaedic in its range of medical information. It sums up the knowledge the

Arabs possessed at that time of Greek, Persian and Hindu medicine and adds some fresh contributions. Printed when printing was still in its infancy, these medical works of al-Razi exercised for centuries a remarkable influence over the minds of the Latin West.

'Ali ibn-al-'Abbas (Haly Abbas, j\* 994), originally a Zoroastrian as his last name, al-Majusi (the Magian), indicates, distinguished himself as the author of al-Kitab al-Maliki (the royal book, Liber regius), which he composed for the great Buwayhid 'Adud-al-Dawlah Fanna Khusraw, who reigned 949-83.<sup>1</sup> This work, also called Kamil al-Sina'ah al-Tibbiyah, a "noble thesaurus comprehending the science and practice of Medicine",<sup>3</sup> was more concise than al-Haw'i and was diligently studied until superseded by ibn-Sina's al-Qaniin. The best parts of al-Maliki are devoted to dietetics and materia medica. Among its original contributions are a rudimentary conception of the capillary system and a proof that in the act of parturition the child does not come out by itself but is pushed out by the muscular contractions of the womb.

The most illustrious name in Arabic medical annals after ibn-Sina al-Razi's is that of ibn-Sina (Latin Avicenna, through Heb. Aven Sina, 980-1037), called by the Arabs al-shaykh al-'arabi, "the sheikh" (of the learned) and "prince" (of the courtiers).<sup>3</sup> Al-Razi was more of a physician than ibn-Sina, but ibn-Sina was more of a philosopher. In this physician, philosopher and poet Arab science culminates and is, one might say, incarnated.

Abu-'Ali al-Husayn, to use his first name, was the son of an Isma'ili, \* Abdullah. Born near Bukhara, he spent all his life in the eastern part of the Moslem world and was buried in Hama-dhan, where his grave is still shown. As a young man he had the good fortune to cure the Samanid sultan of

Bukhara, Nuh ibn-Mansur (reigned 976-97), and was therefore given the privilege of using the ruler's remarkable library. Endowed with extraordinary powers of absorbing and retaining knowledge, this Moslem Persian scholar devoured the contents of the royal library and at the early age of twenty-one was in a position to embark on his career of writing. This included the systematizing

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. i, pp. 236-7; Qifti, p. 232.

<sup>2</sup> Qifti, p. 232. For a complete MS. copy dated 586 (a.d. i 190) see Hitti, Fans and 'Abd-al-Malik, Catalog of Arabic Manuscripts, supp. no. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Also called al-mu allim al-thani, the second teacher (after Aristotle).

of the knowledge of his time. Al-Qifti<sup>1</sup> lists only forty-five works of ibn-Sina; but a modern bibliographer lists under his name over two hundred titles, dealing with philosophy, medicine, geometry, astronomy, theology, philology and art. Of these his best-known poetical production is a lengthy ode describing "the descent of the soul into the body from the higher sphere" and is still memorized by young students in the Arabic East. Among his scientific works the leading two are the Kitab al-Shi fa (book of healing), a philosophical encyclopaedia based upon the Aristotelian tradition as modified by Neo-Platonic influences and Moslem theology, and al-Qaniin fi al-Tib b, which represents the final codification of Greco-Arabic medical thought. The Arabic text of the Qanun was published in Rome in 1593 and was therefore one of the earliest Arabic books to see print.<sup>2</sup> Translated into Latin by Gerard of Cremona in the twelfth century, this Canon, with its encyclopaedic contents, its systematic arrangement and philosophic plan, soon worked its way into a position of pre-eminence in the

medical literature of the age, displacing the works of Galen, al-Razi and al-Majusi and becoming the text-book for medical education in the schools of Europe. In the last thirty years of the fifteenth century it passed through fifteen Latin editions and one Hebrew. In recent years a partial translation into English was made.<sup>3</sup> The book distinguishes mediastinitis from pleurisy and recognizes the contagious nature of phthisis and the spreading of diseases by water and soil. It gives a scientific diagnosis of ankylostomiasis and attributes it to an intestinal worm. Its materia medica considers some seven hundred and sixty drugs. From the twelfth to the seventeenth centuries this work served as the chief guide to medical science in the West and it is still in occasional use in the Moslem East. In the words of Dr. Osler<sup>4</sup> it has remained “a medical bible for a longer period than any other work”.

Among the lesser lights in the medical firmament mention may be made of \*Ali ibn-Tsa (Jesu Haly), the most famous

<sup>1</sup> P. 418. Cf. ibn-abi-Uşaybi'ah, vol. ii, pp. 18-20; ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, pp. 273-4;

Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, vol. i (Weimar, 1898), PP- 453-8-

<sup>2</sup> The first edition of a compendium of al-Shifa' appeared as a supplement to this work.

<sup>3</sup> O. Cameron Gruner, *A Treatise on the Canon of Medicine of Avicenna* (London,

>930). . . .

<sup>4</sup> William Osler, *The Evolution of Modern Medicine* (New Haven, 1922), p. 98. oculist (kahhal) of the Arabs. \*Ali, a Christian, flourished in Baghdad in the first half of the eleventh century, a century and a half after the court physician of al-Mu'tamid, whose name, \*isa ibn-'Ali,<sup>1</sup> is often confused with his. Of the thirty-two medieval Arabic works on ophthalmology his *Tadhkirat al-Kahhalin*<sup>21</sup> (a note for oculists), which has survived in its complete and original form, is one of the oldest and worthiest. Only the two treatises by ibn-Masawayh and Hunayn ibn-Ishaq antedate it. The *Tadhkirah* carefully describes one hundred and thirty eye diseases. It was done once into Hebrew and twice into Latin and is still in use in the East.

Another physician of the second class was ibn-Jazlah (Bengesla, Byngezla, f 1100), originally a Christian,<sup>3</sup> who wrote a medical synopsis entitled *Taqwim al-Abdan fi Tadbir al-Insan* (tables of the body with regard to the physical management of man) modelled on the *Taqwim al-Sihhah* by another Christian physician, ibn-Butlan,<sup>4</sup> who died in Antioch about 1063. In a *Taqwim* diseases are arranged as are the stars in astronomical tables. Ibn-Jazlah's work was translated into Latin at Strassburg in 1532. The last physician to be mentioned in this series is Ya'qub ibn-akhi-Hizam, the stable-master of al-Mu'tadid (892-902), who composed a treatise on horsemanship (*al-Furuslyah wa-Shiyat al-Khayl*) which is the first Arabic work of its kind. It contains some rudiments of the veterinary art and has survived in a manuscript now preserved in the British Museum.<sup>5</sup>

To the Arabs philosophy (*Qalsafah*) was a knowledge of the Philosophy true cause of things as they really are, in so far as it is possible to ascertain them by human faculties. In

essence their philosophy was Greek, modified by the thought of the conquered peoples and by other Eastern influences, adapted to the mental proclivities of Islam and expressed through the medium of Arabic. These Arabs believed Aristotle's works to have represented a complete codification of Greek philosophical lore, as Galen's represented Greek medical lore. Greek philosophy and medicine meant then,

<sup>1</sup> Fihrist, p. 297; ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. i, p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. i, p. 247. Translated, not from the original Arabic, by

Casey A. Wood, The Tadhkirat of Ah ibn Isa (Chicago, 1936)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. vol. i, p. 255; Qifti, p. 365; ibn-Khallikan, vol. iii, p. 255.

\* Hitti, Arab-Syrian Gentleman, pp. 2ibn-abi-Usaybi ah, vol. i, pp. 24) seq.\ Qifti, pp. 294 seq.

. , f<sub>v</sub> - -k

' Fihrist, p. 315. mentions an ibn-akln-l.lizam, perhaps a son of Ya qub.

of course, all that the West possessed. As Moslems the Arabs believed that the Koran and Islamic theology were the summation of religious law and experience. Their original contribution, therefore, was made in the borderland between philosophy and religion on one hand and philosophy and medicine on the other. In course of time Arab authors came to apply the word falasifah or hukama (philosophers or sages) to those philosophers among them whose speculations were not limited by religion, reserving the term mutakallimun or ahi al-kalam (speech-makers, dialecticians)



for those whose system was conditioned by subordination to revealed religion. The mutakallimun, who corresponded to the scholastic writers of Christian Europe, set forth their theories in the form of propositions and were therefore called by that title. Kalām came slowly to mean theology and mutakallim became a synonym for theologian. Al-Ghazzali was primarily a theologian and will be dealt with later. The greatest names in the field of early Arab philosophy were those of al-Kindi, al-Farabi and ibn-Sina.

Al-Kindi Al-Kindi, abu-Yusuf Ya'qub ibn-Ishaq, was born probably in al-Kufah about 801 and flourished in Baghdad, where he died about 873. His pure Arabian descent earned him the title “the philosopher of the Arabs”, and indeed he was the first and last example of an Aristotelian student in the Eastern caliphate who sprang from Arabian stock. Eclectic in his system, al-Kindi endeavoured in Neo-Platonic fashion to combine the views of Plato and Aristotle and regarded the Neo-Pythagorean mathematics as the basis of all science. Al-Kindi was more than a philosopher. He was astrologer, alchemist, optician and music theorist. No less than three hundred and sixty-one works are ascribed to him, but most of them unhappily have been lost. His principal work on geometrical and physiological optics, based on the Optics of Euclid in Theon's recension, was widely used in both East and West until superseded by the greater work of ibn-al-Haytham. In its Latin translation, *De aspectibus*, it influenced Roger Bacon. Al-Kindi's three or four treatises on the theory of music are the earliest extant works in Arabic showing the influence of Greek writers on that subject. In one of these treatises al-Kindi describes rhythm (iqa) as a constituent part of Arabic music. Measured song, or mensural music, must therefore have been known to the Moslems centuries before it was introduced into Christian Europe.<sup>1</sup> Of al-Kindi's writings

more have survived in Latin translations, including those of Gerard of Cremona, than in the Arabic original.

The harmonization of Greek philosophy with Islam begun by Al-Farabi al-Kindi, an Arab, was continued by al-Farabi, a Turk, and completed in the East by ibn-Sina, a Persian.

Muhammad ibn-Muhammad ibn-Tarkhan abu-Nasr al-Farabi<sup>2</sup> (Alpharabius) was born in Transoxiana, educated under a Christian physician and a Christian translator in Baghdad and flourished as a Sufi at Aleppo in the brilliant court of Sayf-al-Dawlah al-Hamdani. He died at Damascus in 950 at the age of about eighty. His system of philosophy, as revealed by his several treatises on Plato and Aristotle, was a syncretism of Platonism, Aristotelianism and Sufism and won him the enviable title of “the second teacher” (al-mtiallim al-thani\ after the great Stagirite. Besides a number of commentaries on Aristotle and other Greek philosophers, al-Farabi composed various psychological, political and metaphysical works, of which the best-known are the Risalat Fusus al-Hikam<sup>2</sup> (epistle containing bezels of wisdom) and the Riscilcih fi Ara, Ahl al-Madwicih a,l-F(idilcih (epistle on the opinions of the people of the superior city).<sup>4</sup> In the latter and in his al-Siyasah {Siyasdt} al-Madaniyah (political regime), al-Farabi, inspired by Plato’s Republic and Aristotle’s Politics, presents his conception of a model city, which he conceives as a hierarchical organism analogous to the human body. The sovereign, who corresponds to the heart, is served by functionaries who are themselves served by others still lower. In his ideal city the object of association is the happiness of its citizens, and the sovereign is perfect morally and intellectually.

Al-Farabi’s other writings reveal him as a fair physician and mathematician, an occult scientist and an excellent musician. In fact he is considered the greatest of all Arabic

music theorists. Besides his treatment of music in two of his compendiums of the sciences, he devotes three major works to the subject, of which

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 600.

\* From Faiab in Turkestan. Ibn-abi-Uṣaybi ah, vol. ii, p. 134] Q<sup>1</sup>\*!<sup>1</sup>, P» <sup>2</sup>77«

' Published by Friedrich Dieterici in his *Die Philosophic der Araber im IX. und X. Jahrhundert n. Chr.*, vol. xiv (Leyden, 1890), pp. 66-83.

<sup>4</sup> Published at Cairo, 1323, and also by Dieterici, *Philosophic der Araber*, vol. xvi (Leyden, 1895), who also translated it as *Der Muslerstaat von Alfdrrdbi* (Leyden, 1900).

the leading is the *Kitāb al-Milsīqi al-Kabīr* (the great book of music).<sup>47</sup> In the presence of his patron Sayf-al-Dawlah he is said to have been able to play his lute so as to cast his hearers into a fit of laughter, draw tears from their eyes or set them all asleep, including even the doorkeepers.<sup>48 49 50</sup> Ancient chants attributed to him are still sung by the Mawlawi dervishes.

After al-Fārābī it was ibn-Sīna (f 1037) who contributed the most important works in Arabic on the theory of music. Ibn-Sma, already treated with the medical men, was indebted to al-Fārābī in his philosophical views. In the judgment of ibn-Khallikān<sup>8</sup> "no Moslem ever reached in the philosophical sciences the same rank as al-Fārābī; and it was by the study of his writings and by the imitation of his style that ibn-Sīna attained proficiency and rendered his own work so useful". It was ibn-Sīna, however, who placed the sum-total of Greek wisdom, codified by his own ingenuity, at

the disposal of the educated Moslem world in an intelligible form. Through him the Greek system, particularly that of Philo, was rendered capable of incorporation with Islam.

he      About the middle of the fourth Moslem century (ca. 970)

Sincerely of t^iere flourished in al-Basrah an interesting eclectic school of popular philosophy, with leanings toward Pythagorean speculations, known as Ikhwān al-Safā' (the brethren of sincerity). The appellation is presumably taken from the story of the ringdove in Kalilah wa-Dimnah in which it is related that a group of animals by acting as faithful friends {ikhwān al-safa\*) to one another escaped the snares of the hunter.[51](#) [52](#)

The Ikhwān, who had a branch in Baghdād, formed not only a philosophical but also a religio-political association with ultraShiite, probably Ismâ'îlite, views and were opposed to the existing political order, which they evidently aimed to overthrow by undermining the popular intellectual system and religious beliefs. Hence arises the obscurity surrounding their activities and membership. A collection of their epistles, Rasail^ arranged in encyclopaedic fashion survives, bearing some obscure names as collaborators. The epistles number fifty-two and treat of mathematics, astronomy, geography, music, ethics, philosophy, embodying the sum-total of knowledge that a cultured man of that age was supposed to acquire. The first fifty-one epistles lead up to the last, which is a summation of all sciences. The language of the epistles shows that Arabic had by that time become an adequate instrument for expressing scientific thought in all its various aspects. Al-Ghazzali was influenced by the Ikhwan's writings,[53](#) [54](#) and Rashid-al-Din Sinan ibn-Sulayman, the chief of the Assassins in Syria, used them diligently.[55](#) When in Baghdad abu-al-'Ala' al-Ma'arri,

the great Syrian poet-philosopher, attended the association's Friday meetings.<sup>56</sup> Abu-Hayyan al-Tawhidi (f 1023<sup>57</sup>), the famous Mu'tazilite who with al-Rawandi (- 915) and al-Ma'arri (f 1057) formed the trinity of archheretics in Islam,<sup>58</sup> was a pupil if not an active member of the fraternity.

The scientific study of astronomy in Islam was begun, as we have already learned, under the influence of an Indian work, the <sup>the</sup> Siddhanta (Ar. Sindhindj, brought to Baghdad (771), translated into Arabic by Muhammad ibn-Ibrahim al-Fazari and used as a model by later scholars. Indian astronomical tables (jika) compiled in the Sasanid period were soon added in translated form (<sup>7</sup>). Greek elements, last in order of time, were first in importance. An early translation of Ptolemy's Almagest was followed by two superior ones: the one by al-Hajjaj ibn-Matar completed in A.H. 212 (827-8) and the other by Hunayn ibn-Ishaq revised by Thabit ibn-Qurrah (f 901). Early in the ninth century the first regular observations (rasd') with fairly accurate instruments were made in Jundaysabur (south-west Persia). In connection with his Bayt al-Hikmah, al-Ma'mun erected at Baghdad near the Sham-

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masiyah gate an astronomical observatory under the directorship

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## AN ASTROLABE DATED a.h. 1010 (a.d. 1601-2)

### 1. Face; 2. Back

of a converted Jew, Sind ibn-*ʿ*Ali, and Yahya ibn-abi-Mansūr (f 830 or 831).<sup>1</sup> Here the caliph's astronomers "not only made systematic observation of the celestial movements, but also verified with remarkably precise results all the fundamental elements of the *Almagest*', the obliquity of the ecliptic, the precession of the equinoxes, the length of the solar year, etc."<sup>3</sup> To this observatory al-Ma<sup>\*</sup>mūn soon added another on Mt. Qāsiyūn outside of Damascus.<sup>3</sup> The equipment in those days consisted of quadrant, astrolabe, dial and globes. Ibrāhīm al-Fazāri (j<sup>\*</sup> ca. 777) was the first Moslem to construct an astrolabe,<sup>4</sup> undoubtedly on the Greek model, as the Arabic name (*asturlāb*') indicates. One of the earliest Arabic treatises on this instrument was written by 'Ali ibn-'Isa al-Asturlabi (maker of astrolabes), who flourished in Baghdad and Damascus before 830.

Al-Ma mūn's astronomers performed one of the most delicate geodetic operations—the measuring of the length of a terrestrial degree. The object was to determine the size of the earth and its circumference on the assumption that the earth was round. The measurement, carried out on the plain of Sinjar north of the Euphrates and also near Palmyra, yielded 565 Arabic miles as the length of a degree of the meridian—a remarkably accurate result, exceeding the real length of the degree at that place by about 2877 feet.<sup>5</sup> This would make the circumference of the earth 20,400 miles and its diameter 6500. Among those who took part in this operation were the sons of Mūsā ibn-Shākir and perhaps al-Khwarizmi, whose tables (*#(/)*), revised a century and a half later by the Spanish astronomer Maslamah al-Majriti (j- ca. 1007) and translated into Latin in 1126 by Adelard of Bath, became the bases for other works both in the East and

the West. Such Arab astronomical tables replaced all their Greek and Indian predecessors and came to be used even in China.

Another eminent astronomer of the period was abu-al-\*Abbas Ahmad<sup>6</sup> al-Farghâni (Alfraganus), of Farghânah in Transoxiana, who in 861 superintended for al-Mutawakkil the erection of a Nilometer at al-Fustât.<sup>7</sup> Al-Farghani's principal work, al-Mud

' Fihrist, p. 275.

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\* C. A. Nallino, art. "Astronomy", Encyclopædia of Islam. Cf. \$a'id, Tabaqat,

pp. 50-51.  
273.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-al-Tbri, p. 237.

<sup>4</sup> Fihrist, p.

<sup>6</sup> Nallino, ' Ilm al-Falak (Cairo, 1911), pp. 281 seq. Kx.falak (celestial sphere^ mav be Babylonian, pp. 105-6.

• "Muhammad" in Fihrist, p. 279; followed by Qifli, p. 286.

' Ibn-abi-Uçaybi'ah, vol. i, p. 207.

khil ila\* I Im Hay at al- Aflak ,<sup>x</sup> was done into Latin in 1135 by John of Seville and Gerard of Cremona, and also into Hebrew. In Arabic it has survived under different titles.<sup>2</sup>

Besides the Ma'muni observatory, one was operated by the three sons of Musa ibn-Shakir (850—70) in their house at Baghdad. The Buwayhid Sultan Sharaf-al-Dawlah (982-9) instituted another in his Baghdad palace, where Abd-al-Rahman al-Sufi (J- 986), whose al-Kawakib al-Thabitah (fixed

stars) is a masterpiece of observational astronomy, Ahmad al-Saghani (j\* 990) and abu-al-Wafa' (f 997) <sup>3</sup> worked. In the court of another Buwayhid, Rukn-al-Dawlah (932-76) of al-Rayy, flourished abu-Ja'far al-Khazin of Khurasan,<sup>4</sup> who ascertained the obliquity of the ecliptic and solved a problem in Archimedes which leads to a cubic equation. Other astronomers made a systematic study of the heavens in Shiraz, Naysabur and Samarqand.

Al-Battani

Al-BirQni

Between 877 and 918 abu-'Abdullah Muhammad ibn-Jabir al-Battani<sup>1</sup> (Albategnius), originally a Sabian from Harran and unquestionably the greatest astronomer of his nationality and time and one of the greatest in Islam, made his observations and studies in al-Raqqah. Al-Battani was an original research worker. He made several emendations to Ptolemy and rectified the calculations for the orbits of the moon and certain planets. He proved the possibility of annular eclipses of the sun, determined with greater accuracy the obliquity of the ecliptic and presented original theories on the determination of the visibility of the new moon.<sup>6</sup>

At Ghaznah, Afghanistan, lived abu-al-Rayhan Muhammad ibn-Ahmad al-Biruni <sup>7</sup> (973-1050), considered the most original and profound scholar Islam produced in the domain of natural science. Here this Arabic author of Persian origin, who spoke Turkish and knew besides Persian Sanskrit, Hebrew and Syriac, produced in 1030 for his patron Mas'ud, son of the famous Mahmud, an account of the science of astronomy entitled al-

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-al-Tbri, p. 236; Qifti, p. 78.



' See Hitti, Faris and 'Abd-al-Malik, Catalog of Arabic Manuscripts, no. 967.

<sup>8</sup> Fihrist, p. 283; ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, p. 97; ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, pp. 508-9.

<sup>4</sup> Qifti, p. 396; Fihrist, pp. 266, 282.  
Fihrist, p. 279.

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- His astronomical work al-Zij al-Sabi was edited by C. A. Nallino (Rome, 1899).

' Ibn-abi-Uṣaybi'ah, vol. ii, pp. 20-21; ibn-al-'Ibri, pp. 324-5. His surname is derived from Birun (Pers, for outside), a suburb of Kath, capital of Khwarizm, though an autograph on a manuscript title-page reproduced in Islamic Culture<sup>^</sup> vol vi (1932) facing p. 534, spells "al-Bayruni".

Qaniin al-Mas udi fi al-Hay\*ah w-al-Nujum. In the same year he composed a short catechism of geometry, arithmetic, astronomy and astrology entitled al-Tafhlm li-Awail Sina at al-Tanjlm. His first work was al-Athar al-Baqiyah \*an al-Qurun al-Khaliyah<sup>^</sup> dealing chiefly with the calendars and eras of ancient peoples. In these works al-Biruni discusses intelligently the then debatable theory of the earth's rotation on its axis and makes accurate determination of latitudes and longitudes. Al-Biruni, who was a Shi'ite with agnostic leanings, sojourned in India<sup>59 60 61</sup> and was charmed by Hindu philosophy. Among his scientific contributions are an explanation of the working of natural springs by the hydrostatic principle, the suggestion that the Indus valley must have been an ancient sea basin filled up with alluvium, and the description, of several monstrosities, including what we call Siamese twins.<sup>8</sup>

Of the Saljuq sultans, Jalal-al-Din Malikshah patronized 'Umar al-astronomical studies. He established in 467 (1074-5) at al-Rayy <sup>Khayyam</sup> or at Naysabur an observatory where there was introduced into the civil calendar an important reform based on an accurate determination of the length of the tropical year. To this task of reforming the old Persian calendar he called to his new observatory the celebrated 'Umar al-Khayyam.<sup>62</sup> Born between 1038 and 1048 at Naysabur, where he died in 1123-4, 'Umar is known to the world primarily as a Persian poet<sup>63 64 65</sup> and free-thinker; very few realize that he was a first-class mathematician and astronomer as well. The researches of al-Khayyam and his collaborators resulted in the production of the calendar named after his patron al-Tarikh al-Jalali, which is even more accurate than the Gregorian calendar. The latter leads to an error of one day in 333° years, whereas al-Khayyam's apparently leads to an error of one day in about 5000 years.

One year after he had destroyed Baghdad, Hulagu commenced (1259) the construction near Lake Urmiah of the great

## Astrology

### The Arabic numerals

Maraghah observatory, whose first director was the illustrious Nasir-al-Din al-Tusi<sup>1</sup> (f 1274), the last of 'Abbasid astronomerphilosophers. The instruments at this observatory were much admired and included an armillary sphere, a mural quadrant and a solstitial armil. In this observatory Nasir-al-Din compiled new astronomical tables called al-Zij al-Il-Khani in honour of Hulagu, the first Il-Khan.<sup>2</sup> The tables became popular throughout Asia, even in China. The foundations of this short-lived observatory are still extant. Close by it stood a library, also built by Hulagu, and said to

have contained 400,000 volumes (?). Most of these books were pillaged by the Mongol armies from Syria, al-Traq and Persia.

In astrology, a handmaid of astronomy, abu-Ma'shar (f 886), a native of Balkh in Khurasan who flourished at Baghdad, was the most distinguished figure.<sup>3</sup> He is the one most frequently cited as an authority in the Christian Middle Ages and under the name Albumasar figured as a prophet in the iconography. Four of his works were translated into Latin in the twelfth century by John of Seville and Adelard of Bath. Apart from his fantastic belief in astral influence as the cause of the birth, events of life and death of everything, abu-Ma'shar communicated to Europe the laws of the tides, which in a treatise he explained on the basis of the relation to the moon's rising and setting.

Several of the Moslem works on astronomy were translated in course of time into Latin, especially in Spain, and exercised a determining influence on the development of the science in Christian Europe.

The same Hindu scholar who brought to the court of al-Mansur the astronomical work Sindhind is credited with having also introduced Hindu arithmetical lore with its numeral system (called in Arabic Hindi) and the zero.<sup>4</sup> Al-Fazari's translation of

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-al-'Ibri, p. 500; Rashid-al-Din Fadl-Allah, yawz\* al-Tawdrkh, ed. and tr. by Quatremere as Histoire des Mongols de la Perse, vol. i (Paris, 1836), pp. 324 seq. (where the name occurs as Naṣir-al-Din).

<sup>2</sup> See below, p. 488, n. 1. <sup>3</sup> Fihrist, p. 277; ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, pp. 198-9.

<sup>4</sup> G. Coedes in Bulletin School of Oriental Studies, vol. vi (1931), pp. 323-8, notes the appearance of the Arabic figures and the zero early in the seventh Christian century in Indo-China, long before its appearance in India proper. Both “zero”, which came to English from an Italian form, and “cipher”, which appeared in English about 200 years earlier, come from Ar. sifr, which is a translation of a Sanskrit word meaning “empty”. According to a Syriac source cited by F. Nau in Journal asiatique, ser. io. vol. xvi (1910), pp. 225 seq., the numerals were known to a Syrian at the monastery of Qinnasrin in 662.

the Hindu works was therefore responsible for making the numerals known to Islam. The tables of al-Khwarizmi and Habash al-Hasib (j- between 867 and 874) probably spread the use of them throughout the Arabic world. But the Arab mathematicians and astronomers were slow to adopt the ingenious Hindu invention. As late as the eleventh century we find abu-Bakr Muhammad al-Karaji (wrongly Karkhi, f between 1019 and 1029) still writing out in his al-Kafifi al-Hisab (the sufficient in arithmetic) all numbers in words. Others, following the old Semitic and Greek practice, used the letters of the alphabet, hisab al-jummal. Ahmad al-Nasawi <sup>1</sup> (f ca. 1040), whose al-Muqni fi al-Hisab al-Hindi (the convincer on Hindu calculation) explains the division of fractions and the extraction of the square and cubic roots in an almost modern manner, used the Indian numerals as had al-Khwarizmi before him.

This al-Khwarizmi,<sup>2</sup> Muhammad ibn-Musa (780-<sup>^</sup>. 850), Al-<sub>—</sub> was the principal figure in the early history of Arabic mathematics. One of the greatest scientific minds of Islam, he influenced mathematical thought to a greater extent than any other medieval writer. Apart from compiling the oldest astronomical tables,<sup>3</sup> al-Khwarizmi composed the oldest

work on arithmetic, known only in a translation, and the oldest work on algebra. The last, *Hisab al-Jabr w-al-Muqabalah* (the calculation of integration and equation), presented through over eight hundred examples, some of which were anticipated by Neo-Babylonians, was his chief work, still surviving in Arabic. Translated in the twelfth century into Latin by Gerard of Cremona, this work of al-Khwarizmi was used until the sixteenth century as the principal mathematical text-book of European universities and served to introduce into Europe the science of algebra, and with it the name. Al-Khwarizmi's works were also responsible for the introduction into the West of the Arabic numerals called algorithms after him.<sup>4</sup> Among later mathematicians influenced by al-Khwarizmi are 'Umar al-Khayyam, Leonardo Fibonacci of Pisa (f after 1240) and Master Jacob of Florence, whose Italian treatise

<sup>1</sup> From Nasa in Khurasan.

<sup>2</sup> Khwarizm, whose name he bears, is modern Khiwa, a country on the lower

course of the Amu Darya (ancient Oxus). Tabari, vol. iii, p. 1364, calls him al-Majusi, i.e. the descendant of a Magian.

<sup>3</sup> Consult *Fihrist*, p. 274, copied by Qifti, p. 286. Cf. *ibn-al-'Ibri*, p. 237.

<sup>1</sup> "Augrim", "augrym", in Chaucer, *A Treatise on the Astrolabe*, pt. i, § 7 and § 8.

on mathematics, dated 1307, contains, as does one of Leonardo's works, the six types of quadratic equations given by the Moslem mathematician. Al-Khayyám's algebra,<sup>1</sup> which marks a considerable advance on that of al-

Khwarizmi, contains geometric and algebraic solutions of equations of the second degree and an admirable classification of equations.

## Alchemy

After materia medica, astronomy and mathematics the Arabs made their greatest scientific contribution in chemistry. In the study of chemistry and other physical sciences the Arabs introduced the objective experiment, a decided improvement over the hazy speculation of the Greeks. Accurate in the observation of phenomena and diligent in the accumulation of facts, the Arabs nevertheless found it difficult to project proper hypotheses. To draw truly scientific conclusions and elaborate a final system was the weakest point in their intellectual armour.

The father of Arabic alchemy<sup>2</sup> was Jābir ibn-Hayyān<sup>3</sup> (Geber), who flourished in al-Kūfah about 776. His name, after that of al-Razi (j- 925), is the greatest in the field of medieval chemical science. Legend makes the Umayyad prince Khalid ibn-Yazid ibn-Mu'awiyah (j- 704) and the sixth imam, Ja'far al-Sadiq of al-Madinah (j- 765), his teachers. Like his Egyptian and Greek forerunners Jabir acted on the assumption that base metals such as tin, lead, iron and copper could be transmuted into gold or silver by means of a mysterious substance, to the search for which he devoted his energy. He more clearly recognized and stated the importance of experimentation than any other early alchemist and made noteworthy advance in both the theory and practice of chemistry. Some two centuries after his death, as a street was being rebuilt in al-Kūfah, his laboratory was found and in it a mortar and a large piece of gold were unearthed. Western tradition credits him with the discovery of several chemical compounds not mentioned in the twenty-two surviving Arabic works that bear his name.<sup>1</sup>

Five of these works ascribed to Jabir, including Kitab al-Rahmah (the book of mercy), Kitab al-Taj nit (of concentration) and al-Zibaq al-Sharqi (of

<sup>1</sup> Tr. Daoud S. Kasir, *The Algebra of Omar Khayyam* (New York, 1932).

<sup>2</sup> This word is Ar. al-kimiya , which goes back through Gr. to an ancient Egyptian word meaning “black”.

<sup>3</sup> Said to have been a Sabian converted to Shi'ah; according to others, descended from the South Arabian tribe al-Azd. Fihnst, pp. 354\*5, Q'flb PP- 160-61.

<sup>4</sup> J.lajji Khalfah, *passim*, cites twenty-seven works. See Paul Kraus, *Jabir Ibn Hayyan*, vol. i (Cairo, 1943), pp- 3\*17°-

Eastern mercury) have been published. It is evident that the vast majority of the hundred extant alchemical works in Arabic and in Latin which pass under his name are spurious. Nevertheless, the works to which his name was attached were after the fourteenth century the most influential chemical treatises in both Europe and Asia. Of a few contributions we are certain. Jabir described scientifically the two principal operations of chemistry: calcination and reduction. He improved on the methods for evaporation, sublimation, melting and crystallization. But the claim that he knew how to prepare crude sulphuric and nitric acids and mix them supposedly with salt so as to produce aqua regia is unsubstantiated. In general Jabir modified the Aristotelian theory of the constituents of metal in a way that survived, with slight alterations, until the beginning of modern chemistry in the eighteenth century.

Later Moslem chemists acclaim ibn-Hayyan as their master. Even the best among them, e.g. the Arabic-writing Persian poet-statesman al-Tughra'i<sup>1</sup> (f ca. 1121) and abu-al-Qasim al-Traqi, who flourished in the second half of the thirteenth century,<sup>2</sup> made very little improvement on his methods. They continued the quest for the two alchemical will-o'-the-wisps: the philosopher's stone<sup>3</sup> and the elixir<sup>4</sup> of life. In fact in no branch of pure or physical science was any appreciable advance made after 'Abbasid days. The Moslems of today, if dependent on their own books, would have even less than their distant ancestors in the eleventh century. In medicine, philosophy, mathematics, botany and other disciplines a certain point was reached; and then followed a standstill. Reverence for the past with its traditions, both religious and scientific, has bound the Arab intellect with fetters which it is only now beginning to shake off. It should, however, be noted to the eternal glory of medieval Islam that it succeeded for the first time in the history of human thought in harmonizing and reconciling monotheism, the greatest contri-

<sup>1</sup> Famous for his *Lamiyat al-Ajam*, the ode rhyming in I for the non-Arabs. Tughrai means "chancellor", the one who writes at the top of state papers the elegant flourish containing name and title of the ruler issuing the document. Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, pp. 284 seq.

<sup>2</sup> See Hajji Khalfah, vol. iii, p. 218, vol. v, p. 47, vol. vi, p. 304- His *al-Ilm al-Muktasab fi Zira'at al-Dhahab* (knowledge acquired concerning the cultivation of gold) was edited and Englished by E. J. Holmyard (Paris, 1923).

\* *Al-kibrit al-ahniar*, literally "the red sulphur"

<sup>4</sup> From Ar. *al-ikslr*, originally Gr.



bution of the ancient Semitic world, with Greek philosophy, the greatest contribution of the ancient Indo-European world, thus leading Christian Europe towards the modern point of view.<sup>1</sup>

In the field of natural history the Arabs' least striking success was in zoology, whereas the Spanish Moslems made a distinct contribution in botany, as we shall later see. Arabic writers on the animal kingdom were primarily literary men whose works consisted of collections of names and epithets given by the Arabs to animals and illustrated by quotations from the poets. The study of the horse formed one conspicuous exception and was developed almost to the rank of a science. A number of special monographs were composed on this animal, enumerating its varieties, naming the parts of its body, describing its colours and designating its desirable and undesirable qualities.<sup>2</sup>

**Ai-jahiz** An early representative of the zoological and anthropological sciences was abu-'Uthman 'Amr ibn-Bahr al-Jahiz (the goggleeyed, f 868-9), who flourished in al-Basrah and whose *Kitab al-Hayawan* (book of animals) is more theological and folkloric than biological. This work, in which the author quotes Aristotle, contains germs of later theories of evolution, adaptation and animal psychology. Al-Jahiz knew how to obtain ammonia from animal offal by dry distillation. His influence over later zoologists, e.g. the Arabic-writing Persian cosmographer al-Qazwini<sup>3</sup> (f 1283) and the Egyptian al-Damiri (f 1405)—both of whom treated zoology as a branch of philology and literature—is manifest. Al-Damiri is the greatest Arab zoologist.<sup>4</sup> But the influence of al-Jahiz as a radical theologian and man of letters is greater. He founded a Mu'tazilite sect bearing his name<sup>5</sup> and was one of the most productive and frequently quoted scholars in Arabic literature.<sup>6</sup> His originality, wit,

satire and learning made him widely known, but his repulsive ugliness made the Caliph al-

<sup>1</sup> Sec below, p. 550. -

<sup>2</sup> Consult al-Asma'i, *Kitab al-Khayl*, ed. August Haffner (Vienna, 1895); ibn-Durayd in William Wright, *Opuscula Arabica* (Leyden, 1859); al-Kalbi, *Nasab al-Khayl fi al-Jahiliyah w-al-Islam* and al-A'rabi, *Asma Khayl al-'Arab zva-Fursdniha*, ed. G. Levi della Vida (Leyden, 1928).

<sup>3</sup> His leading work is 'Ajaib al-Makkludt wa-Ghara ib al-Maztjuddl (the wonders of creation and the oddities of existence), ed. Wiistenfeld (Gottingen, 1849).

<sup>4</sup> His *Hayat al-Hayawan* (animal life) was printed in Cairo several times; tr. into English by A. S. G. Jayakar (London, 1906, 1908), vol. i and vol. ii, pt. I.

<sup>6</sup> Baghdadi, ed. Hitti, pp. 117-18.

- Yaqut, vol. vi, pp. 75-8, lists over 120 books from his pen.

Mutawakkil change his mind about appointing him tutor to his sons.<sup>1</sup>

In mineralogy, which stood in close relation to alchemy, the Lapidaries Arabs made little progress. Their fondness for precious stones and their interest in the occult qualities of minerals explains the many lapidaries, over fifty, composed by Arabic authors. Of these the oldest extant is that of 'Utârid ibn-Muhammad al-Hâsib (possibly al-Kâtib<sup>2</sup>) of the ninth century, but the best known is *Azhâr al-Afkâr fi Jawâhir al-Ahjâr* (the flowers of thought on precious stones) by Shihâb-al-Dîn al-Tifâshi,<sup>3</sup> who died in Cairo, 1253. Al-Tifâshi discusses twenty-four precious stones: their origin,

geography, purity, price, medicinal and magical values and, except for Pliny and the spurious Aristotelian lapidary, quotes only Arabic sources. The famous al-Bīrūnī with almost complete accuracy determined the specific gravity of eighteen precious stones and metals.

The institution of the holy pilgrimage, the orientation of the Geography mosques towards Makkah and the need for determining the direction of the Ka'bah at the time of prayer gave religious impetus to the Moslem study of geography. Astrology, which necessitated the determining of the latitudes and longitudes of all places throughout the world, added its scientific influence. Moslem traders between the seventh and ninth centuries reached China on the east both by sea and by land, attained the island of Zanzibar and the farthest coasts of Africa on the south, penetrated Russia on the north and were checked in their advance westward only by the dreaded waters of the "Sea of Darkness" (Atlantic). The reports of returning merchants naturally aroused popular interest in distant lands and alien peoples. Sulaymān al-Tājir (the merchant) of Sīrāf on the Persian Gulf, the account of whose journeys into the Far East was written by an anonymous author in 851, gives us the first Arabic description of China and the coast-lands of India. Sulaymān reports the use of finger-prints as signatures by the Chinese.<sup>4</sup> From this and similar narratives there gradually

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khallikān, vol. ii, pp. 105-9.

<sup>2</sup> Fihrist, p. 278. His work *Manāfi' al-Ahjār* (the uses of precious stones) is preserved in manuscript form in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris; de Slane, *Catalogue des manuscrits arabes* (Paris, 1893-5), no. 2775<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Ed. and tr. (Italian) Antonio Raineri (Biscia) (Florence, 1818).

<sup>4</sup> Silsilat al-Tau'arikh, ed. Langles, p. 44. Cf. tr. by E. Renaudot (London, 1733; p. 26; Ahbàr af-jîin wa-l-Hind, ed. and tr. J. Sauvaget (Paris, 1945), p. 19.

Greek

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“ World cupola”

evolved the stories that have clustered round the name of Sindbad the Sailor. The earliest reliable account of Russia is that of Ahmad ibn-Fadlan ibn-Hammad, sent in 921 by al-Muqtadir to the king of the Bulgars, who resided along the Volga. Most of his account is reproduced in Yaqut's monumental geographical dictionary, Mu jam al-Buldan. Al-Mas'udi<sup>1</sup> refers to Moslem traders among al-Dir, Slavic tribes perhaps near the Pripet, a tributary of the Dnieper.

Ptolemy's Geography, which had a list of places located by latitude and longitude, was translated into Arabic either directly or through Syriac several times, notably by Thabit ibn-Qurrah (f 901). With this as a model the celebrated Khwarizmi had composed his Surat al-A rd<sup>2</sup> (image of the earth), which served as a basis for later works and stimulated geographical studies and the composition of original treatises. Al-Khwarizmi's work was accompanied by an “image of the earth”, a map executed by him and sixty-nine other scholars at the instigation of al-Ma'mun—the first map of the heavens and the world in Islam. Al-Mas'udi,<sup>3</sup> who flourished in the first half of the tenth century, consulted this map. Al-Khwarizmi's geography continued to

influence Moslem authors down to the fourteenth century, as is illustrated by abu-al-Fida\*.

In the meantime the early Arab geographers had gained from India the notion that there was a world centre which they styled arlnj a corruption of the name of the Indian town Ujjayini (Ozene in Ptolemy's Geography^ where there had been an astronomical observatory and on the meridian of which the "world cupola"<sup>5</sup> or "summit" was supposed to lie. This arm they located on the equator between the extremes of east and west. The western prime meridian was thought by them to be 90° from this mythical place. Moslem geographers in general measured longitude from the prime meridian used by Ptolemy, that of the islands now called - the Canaries.

The first independent geographical treatises in Arabic took the form of road books in which itineraries occupied a prominent place. Ibn-Khurdadhbih (f ca. 912), of Persian descent, director

[1](#)

Fakhri, pp. 321-2.

[2](#)

I\$fakhri, pp. 127, 139; ibn-Hawqal, p. 198; Maqdisi, p..426. .

[3](#)

s p j^8

[4](#) Ibshihi, vol. 1, p. 144.

[4](#)

‘ Mentioned in Maqdisi, p. 323, 1. 20; ibn-Hawqal, p. 261, 1. 13; Yaqut, Bulddn,

[5](#)

vol. i, p. 822, 1. 22 (where it is misspelt).

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[6](#)

• Iṣfakhri, p 153 Cf. Maqdisi, pp. 44?-3- Maqdisi, pp. 402, 407-9.

[7](#)

William W'illcocks, Irrigation of Mesopotamia (London, 1917), pp. xvii seq., 11 seq.

[8](#)

P. 321.

<sup>8</sup> Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 555, 1. 4.

[9](#)

<sup>4</sup> Iṣfakhri, pp. 305 seq., copied by ibn-Hawqal, pp. 355 seq.

[10](#)

\* Iṭṭakhri, p. 81; same in ibn-Hawqal, p. 160; Maqdisi, pp. 117-18.

[11](#)

• Yaqut, vol. i, p. 751, vol. iii, p. 394; cf. vol. i, p. 97, 11. 15-j6.

[12](#)

<sup>T</sup> For etymology see below, p. 528, n. 6. The plant itself was a native of China.

[13](#)

Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 712-13; ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi, p. 141.

[14](#)

<sup>1</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 1389-93, 1419.

[15](#)

\* Cf. Ja<sup>ii</sup>?, Bay an, vol. i. p. 79, 11. 27-8.

[16](#)

Yaqut, Udaba', vol. ii, p. 259.

[17](#)

Al-Tanukhi, al-Faraj ba d al-Shiddah (Cairo, 1904), vol. ii, p. 149.

[18](#)

Nasr ibn-Harun was the Buwayhid vizir. See Miskawayh, Tajanb al-Umam, ed. Margoliouth, vol. ii (Cairo and Oxford, 1915), pp. 408, 412.

[19](#)

\$abi', Wuzara , p. 95.

[20](#)

<sup>6</sup> A. Mingana in Bulletin John Rylands Library, vol. IO (1926), pp. 127-33.

[21](#)

Yaqut, Buldan, vol. ii, p. 662.

[22](#)

On the Monophysite and Jacobite patriarchs see Asscmani (al-Sam'ani), Bibliotheca Orientalis, vol. ii (Rome, 1721).

[23](#)

Yaqut, vol. ii, p. 662, 1. 18.

[24](#)

Under dayr. [25](#) P. 349.

[25](#)

<sup>3</sup> Dâr al-Rûm, which Flügel, the editor, in his notes erroneously makes Con

[26](#)

stantinople.

[27](#)

Consult P. Y. Saeki, The Nestorian Documents and Relics in China (Tokyo,

[28](#)

<937). PP- 10 seq.



[29](#)

\* Sûrs. 2 : 70-73; 5 : 16, 66-9.  
183.

• P.

[30](#)

P. 340,1. 26; Mas'udi, vol. ii, p. 112.      \* From Pers, mino,  
heavenly.

<sup>3</sup> Mas'udi, vol. iv, pp. 61-71, devotes a section to them.

<sup>4</sup> Fihrist, p. 272, 1. 11.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. p. 302, quoted by ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. i, pp.  
220-21.

' For more on the \$abians consult D. Chwolsohn, Die Ssabier  
und der Ssabismus,

[31](#)

vols. (St Petersburg, 1856).

[32](#)

Ibn-al-'Ibri, Chronicon Syriacum, ed. and tr. P. J. Bruns and G.  
G. Kirsch

[33](#)

(Leipzig, 1789), vol. ii (text), p. 133 = vol. i, pp. 134-5.

[34](#)

Buldan, p. 315, 1. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Idrisi, *Sifat al-Maghrib*, ed. and tr. R. Dozy and M. J. de Goeje (Leyden, 1864-66), p. 27 (text) = p. 32 (tr.).

[35](#)

Ibn-Battutah, vol. i v, pp. 396.

[36](#)

De Mas Latrie, *Relations et commerce de l'Afrique septentrionale* (Paris, 1886), pp. 27-8; Arnold, *Preaching*, pp. 126 seq.

[37](#)

» Hitti, *al-Lughdt al-Sdmīyah* (Beirut. 1922), pp. 30-46.

[38](#)

Daghal al-'Ayn (the disorder of the eye), MS.; one copy is in Taymur Pasha's library, Cairo, another in Leningrad.

[39](#)

By Max Meyerhof (Cairo, 1928).

[40](#)

Q'fti, p. 143.

[41](#)

\* Ibid. pp. 185-9.

[42](#)

' Ibn-abi-U'aybi'ah, vol. i, p. 222; Qiffi, p. 191.

[43](#)

Edward G. Browne, *Arabian Medicine* (Cambridge, 1921), p. 44.

[44](#)

Wrongly referred to by later writers as “al-‘Adudi”, after the Buwayhid ruler ‘Adud-al-Dawlah, who established on its site his own hospital.

[45](#)

Ibn-abi-USaybi'ah, vol. i, pp. 309-10. [66](#) Pp. 299-302.

[46](#)

*A Treatise on the Small-Pox and Measles* (London, 1848).

[47](#)

Extracts by J. P. N. Land appeared in *Actes du sixième congrès international des orientalistes*, pt. 2, sec. I (Leyden, 1885), pp. 100-168. Fr. tr. by Rodolphe d'Erlanger, *La musique arabe*, vols, i, ii, al-Färäbi (Paris, 1930-35). Hitti, Faris and 'Abd-al-Malik, *Catalog of Arabic Manuscripts*, no. 1984.

[48](#)

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khallikän, vol. ii, p. 501.

[49](#)

\* Vol. ii, p. 499 = de Slane, vol. iii, p. 307.

[50](#)

From this it would appear that the usual rendition, “the brethren of purity”,

[51](#)

“les frères de la pureté”, “die lauterer Brüder”, is not exact.

[52](#)

I. Goldziher in *Der Islam*, vol. i (1910), pp. 22-6.

[53](#)

Dieterici issued and translated a great part of the text in his *Die Philosophie der*

Araber, iô vols. (Leipzig and Leyden, 1858-1895). The last Oriental edition is that of Khayr-al-Din al-Zirikli, 4 vols. (Cairo, 1928).

[54](#)

Cf. *Ihya*, vol. ii, p. 254, ll. 8-12, p. 262, ll. 18-20, with *Rasa il*, vol. i, p. 180.

[55](#)

M. C. Defrémery in *Journal asiatique*, ser. 5, vol. v (1855), pp. 5'6.

[56](#)

Consult his *Diwân*: *Siqt al-Zand*, ed. Shâkir Shuqayr (Bcirût, 1884), p. 112, l. 15, p. 104, ll. 4-5.

[57](#)

Cf. ibn-Khali:î.ân, vol. ii, p. 470; Yâqût, üdaba , vol. v, p. 381.

[58](#)

<sup>8</sup> Al-SuLki, Tabaqât al- Shaft iyah al-Kubra (Cairo, 1906), vol. iv, p. 3.

[59](#)

Ed. E. Sachau (Leipzig, 1878); tr. Sachau (London, 1879).

[60](#)

\* See his account Tahqiq Ma li-al-Htnd, ed. E. Sachau (London, 1887); tr. Sachau (London, 1888), 2 vols. (reprinted London, 1910).

[61](#)

In a still unpublished work of his the first reference to tea in other than Chinese works occurs; F. Krenkow in Majallat al-Majma , vol. xiii (1935), P- 388.

[62](#)

Full Arabic name abu-al-Fath ‘Umar ibn-Ibrahim al-Khayyami (the tent

[63](#)

maker). On his life see Qiffi, pp. 243-4; Qazwini, Athar, p. 318.

[64](#)

His Rubalvdt (quatrains), done first into English by  
FitzGerald (London, 1859),

[65](#)

have since appeared in French, German, Italian, Danish and  
Arabic translations.

[66](#)

<sup>6</sup> Ed. Cornelius Van Dyck (London, 1866, and Beirut, 1872);  
tr. W. A. GreenhiH,

<sup>1</sup> Vol. iii, p. 64.    <sup>2</sup> Ed. Hans v. Mzik (Leipzig, 1926).    <sup>3</sup>  
Vol. ii, p. 308.

<sup>4</sup> Variants Ujjain, Uzayn, Udhayn, .zlc. Ibn-Rustah, p. 22, 1. 17; Mas'udi Tanbih, p. 225, 1. 2; abu-al-Fida', cd. Rcinaud and de Slane, p. 376, 11. S, 12.

<sup>4</sup> Qubbat al-ard, abu-al-Fida', pp. 375, 376; ibn-Rustah, p. 22, 11. 17 seq.', Biruni, Tahqiq, p. 158.

of the post and intelligence service in al-Jibal (Media), initiated the series with his al-Masalik w-al-Mamalik,<sup>1</sup> the first edition of which appeared about 846. This work, especially valuable for its historical topography, was used by ibn-al-Faqih, ibn-Hawqal, al-Maqdisi and later geographical writers. In 891-2 the Shiite ibn-Wadih al-Ya'qubi,<sup>2 3 4 5 6</sup> who flourished in Armenia and Khurasan, produced his Kitab al-Buldan<sup>2</sup> (book of countries), which struck a new note in emphasizing topographical and economical detail. Soon after 928 Qudamah, who was born a Christian but adopted Islam and held office as revenue accountant in the central administration at Baghdad, completed his al-Kharaj, which discusses the division of the caliphate into provinces, the organization of the postal service and the taxation for each district. Another Arab geographer of Persian origin, ibn-Rustah, compiled about 903 his al-A'laq al-Nafisah\* (precious bags of travelling provisions). In that same year ibn-al-Faqih al-Hama-dhani, so called from his birthplace, completed his Kitab al-Buldan^ a comprehensive geography often quoted by al-Maqdisi and Yaqut.

The great systematic geographers of the Arabs do not make literary their appearance until the advent of al-Istakhri, ibn-Hawqal and <sup>rap</sup>her's al-Maqdisi in the middle of the fourth Moslem century. Born in Istakhr (Persepolis), al-Istakhri

flourished about 950 and produced his *Masalik al-Mamalik* with coloured maps for each country. This work was an elaboration of the geographical system established by abu-Zayd al-Balkhi (f 934), who flourished at the Samanid court and whose work has not been preserved. The system initiated by al-Balkhi and al-Istakhri paid little attention to countries outside Islam and made the text largely a description of the accompanying maps. Its representatives were travellers themselves. Al-Istakhri is the second writer to mention windmills (in Sijistan), the first reference to them having been made by al-Mas'udi.<sup>7</sup> At al-Istakhri's request ibn-Hawqal (fl. 943—77), who travelled as far as Spain, revised the maps and text of his geography. Ibn-Hawqal later rewrote the whole book and issued it under his own name as *al-Masälik w-al-Mamaliky*. To this same school belongs the more original work of al-Maqdisi (or al-Muqaddasi), so called because he was born in Jerusalem (Bayt al-Maqdis). This geographer visited all the Moslem lands except Spain, Sijistan and India and in 985-6 embodied an account of his twenty years of travel in a delightful work, *Ahsan al-Taqäsım fi Marifat al-Aqälm*<sup>2</sup>, (the best of classification for the knowledge of regions), which contains much valuable and fresh information.

In this same period flourished the Yamanite geographer and archaeologist al-Hasan ibn-Ahmad al-Hamdäni, who died (945) in a prison at San'ä' and whose two works *al-kill*<sup>\*</sup> and *Sijät Jazirat al-Arab*<sup>4</sup> constitute an important contribution to our knowledge of pre-Islamic and Islamic Arabia. The globe-trotter al-Mas'üdi, who flourished in this period, we shall treat of with the historians. In the mineralogical part of their epistles<sup>5</sup> the Ikhwän al-Safä', who also belong to this time, elaborated a theory of cosmic cycles by which cultivated lands become desert, desert



lands become cultivated, steppes change into seas and seas change into steppes or mountains.

## Väqüt

Before the close of the 'Abbäsid age lived the greatest of the Eastern Moslem geographers, Yäqüt<sup>6</sup> ibn-'Abdulläh al-Hamawi (1179-1229), author of the geographical dictionary *Mu jam al-Buldänj* often cited in the foregoing pages, and of the equally important dictionary of literati *Mu jam al- Udaba* . Born in Asia Minor of Greek parents, young Yäqüt was bought in Baghdad by a merchant from Hamäh (hence his surname al-Hamawi) who, after giving him a good education and employing him for several years as a travelling clerk, enfranchised him. To support himself Yäqüt roamed from place to place copying and selling manuscripts. In 1219-20 he had to flee before the Tartar invasion of Khwärizm “as naked as he shall be when raised from the dust of the grave on the day of the resurrection”.<sup>8</sup> The first

<sup>1</sup> Ed. de Goeje (Leyden, 1873); another version, *šütrat al-Ard^wi*. J. H. Kramers, 2 vols. (Leyden, 1938-9).

<sup>2</sup> Ed. de Goeje (Leyden, 1877). <sup>3</sup> See above, p. 50, n. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Ed. D. H. Müller, 2 vols. (Leyden, 1884-91).

<sup>6</sup> Ed. Zirikli, vol. ii, pp. 80 seq. Cf. Mas'üdi, *Tanbih*, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> The word means “ruby”. Slaves were often given names of precious things, e.g. Lu'lu' (pearl), Jawhar (gem).

<sup>'</sup> Ed. F. Wüstenfeld, 6 vols. (Leipzig, 1866-73).

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-Khallikän, vol. iii, p. 162 = de Slane, vol. iv, p. 10.

draft of his geographical dictionary was drawn at al-Mawsil in 1224 and the final redaction was completed in 1228 at Aleppo, where he died. This Mu jam, in which names of places are alphabetically arranged, is a veritable encyclopædia, containing, in addition to the whole fund of geographical knowledge of the age, valuable information on history, ethnography and natural science.

Literary Islamic geography left no direct impression on European medieval thought, as the works of these geographers found no translators into Latin. Certain aspects of astronomical geography, including an approximately correct theory of the causation of tides, worked out by abu-Ma'shar, and of the length of the terrestrial degree, did find their way into the West, the latter through a translation of al-Farghâni's work on astronomy. Likewise fragments of the geographical lore of the Greeks as exemplified by Aristotle and Ptolemy were reintroduced to the West through the Arabs. But most of the contribution of the Arab geographers failed to pass on. This contribution included descriptive geography of the Far East, East and Sudanese Africa and the steppe land of Russia; more accurate cartography, especially in the form of world maps; and provincial geography, where one country is taken as a unit and the relation between the lives of the people and the physical environment is shown. The primary interest of the Latin Occident in Arabic books had for its object the preparation of calendars, star tables and horoscopes and the interpretation of the hidden meaning in the words of the Scriptures through commentaries on Aristotle. The bulk of this scientific material, whether astronomical, astrological or geographical, penetrated the West through Spanish and Sicilian channels. The contributions of al-Bitrûji of Cordova, al-Zarqali of Toledo and al-Idrisi of Palermo will be discussed under Spain and Sicily.

The majority of the earliest historical writings surviving in Arabic date from the 'Abbâsid period. Few of those composed under the Umayyads have been preserved. The first subjectmatter came, as we have learned before, from the oral legends and anecdotes relating to pre-Islamic days and from the religious traditions which clustered round the name and life of the Prophet. In the pre-Islamic field Hishâm al-Kalbi of al-Kûfah (f 819) particularly distinguished himself. Of the one hundred and twenty-nine works listed in al-Fihris<sup>F</sup> as his, only three have survived;<sup>2</sup> but extracts from others can be found quoted by al-Tabari, Yaqut and other historical writers.

## Historiography

The first work based upon religious traditions was the *Slrat Rasul Allah*, the biography of the Prophet by Muhammad ibn-Ishaq of al-Madinah, whose grandfather Yasar was among the Christian children captured in 633 by Khalid ibn-al-Walid at 'Ayn al-Tamr in al-Traq.<sup>3</sup> This biography by ibn-Ishaq, who died in Baghdad about 767, has come down to us only in the later recension of ibn-Hisham,<sup>4</sup> who died in 834 at Cairo.<sup>5</sup> Then came works dealing with the early wars and conquests of Islam, the *Maghazi* by Musa ibn-'Uqbah<sup>6</sup> (f 758), by al-AVaqidi<sup>7</sup> (f 822/3), both of al-Madinah, and by others. From the pen of ibn-Sa'd, who died in Baghdad in 845 and is known as the secretary of al-Waqidi,<sup>8</sup> we have the first great book of classified biographies<sup>9</sup> containing sketches of the lives of the Prophet, the Companions and their Successors (al-tabi un) down to his own time. Two of the leading historians of the Moslem conquests were the Egyptian ibn-<sup>c</sup>Abd-al-Hakam (f 870-71), whose *Futuh Misr wa-Akhbdrthha*<sup>™</sup> is the earliest extant document on the conquest of Egypt, North Africa and Spain, and the Arabic-writing Persian Ahmad ibn-Yahya al-Baladhuri (j- 892),

whose main works were the Futuh al-Buldan<sup>™</sup> - and the Ansab al-Ashraf<sup>™</sup> (book of the lineages of nobles). Al-Baladhuri was one of the first to integrate the many stories of the conquests of various cities and lands into one comprehensive whole, thus ending the era in which the monograph was the typical form of historical composition.

### Early formal historians

The time was now ripe for formal historical composition based on these legends, traditions, biographies, genealogies and

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 95-8.

<sup>2</sup> Of these the best-known is the Kitab al-Asndm, ed. A<sup>^</sup>imad Zaki (Cairo, 1914).

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, p. 282.

<sup>4</sup> Ed. Wustenfeld, 2 vols. (Gottingen, 1858-60).

<sup>5</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 520.

\* Compiled by ibn-Qadi Shuhbah in 1387.

<sup>7</sup> Ed. von Kremer (Calcutta, 1856). See ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, pp. 324-6.

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, p. 326.

' Ed. Sachau et al., 9 vols. (Leyden and Berlin, 1904-28).

<sup>10</sup> Ed. Charles C. Torrey (New Haven, 1922).

<sup>11</sup> Ed. de Goeje (Leyden, 1866); tr. Hitti, The Origins of the Islamic State (New York, 1916), first part; second

part, F. C. Murgotten (New York, 1924).

<sup>12</sup> Ed. W. Ahlwardt, vol. xi (Greifswald, 1883); S. D. F. Goitein, vol. v (Jerusalem, 1936); Max Schloessinger, vol. iv B (Jerusalem, 1938).

narratives. The model was evidently Persian and was provided by such works as the Pahlawi Khudhay-namah (the book of kings), which had been turned into Arabic by ibn-al-Muqaffa\* (f 757) under the title Siyar Muluk al-Ajam. The concept of a world history in which early events are but a prelude to the history of Islam goes back to Jewish-Christian tradition. The form of presentation, however, continued to be that of the stereotyped Islamic tradition.<sup>1</sup> Each event is related in the words of eye-witnesses or contemporaries and transmitted to the final narrator, the author, through a chain of intermediary reporters. This technique served to develop exactitude, as did also the insistence on dating occurrences even to the month and day. But the authenticity of the reported fact generally depended upon the continuity of this chain (isnad) and the confidence in the integrity of each reporter rather than upon a critical examination of the fact itself. Apart from the use of personal judgment in the choice of the series of authorities and in the arrangement of the data, the historian exercised very little power of analysis, criticism, comparison or inference.

Among the first formal historians was ibn-Qutaybah, properly Muhammad ibn-Muslim al-Dinawari.<sup>2</sup> Ibn-Qutaybah died at Baghdad in 889 after producing his Kitab al-Ma'arif<sup>2</sup> (book of knowledge), a manual of history. Another was his contemporary abu-Hanifah Ahmad ibn-Dawud al-Dinawari<sup>4</sup> (j\* 895), who flourished in Isbahan (Isfahan) and Dinawar (in the Persian 'Iraq). His principal work was al-Akhbar al-TtwaK (long narratives), a universal history from the Persian point of view. Both were of Iranian extraction and produced

several literary and philological works besides histories. At the same time flourished the geographer and historian ibn-Wadih al-Ya'qubi, whose compendium of universal history<sup>6</sup> ending in A.H. 258 (872) preserves the ancient and unfalsified Shi'ite tradition. To this group belongs Hamzah al-Isfahani, who worked in Isbahan, where he died ca. 961, and whose rather critical annals<sup>7</sup> became

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 394.

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<sup>2</sup> See Fihrist, pp. 77-8; Nawawi, Tahdhib, p. 771; Samam, Ansab, tol. 443a.

<sup>3</sup> Ed. Wiistenfeld (Gottingen, 1850).

<sup>4</sup> See Fihrist, p. 78; Yaqut, Udaba , vol. i, pp. 123-7.

<sup>6</sup> Ed. Vladimir Guirgass (Leyden, 1888).

• Ta'rikh, ed. Th. Houtsma, 2 vols. (Leyden, 1883).

<sup>7</sup> Ta'rikh Sini Muluk al-Ard wal-Anbiya , ed. I. M. E. Gottwaldt (Leipzig, 1844); tr. into Latin by Gottwaldt (Leipzig, 1848).

known comparatively early in modern Europe. Another great historian of Persian stock was Miskawayh<sup>1</sup> (f 1030), who held a high office in the court of the Buwayhid 'Adud-al-Dawlah and compiled a universal history<sup>2</sup> reaching down to A.H. 369 (979-80). Miskawayh, who was also a philosopher and physician, ranks among the leading Moslem historians, of whom the two greatest were undoubtedly al-Tabari and al-Mas'udi.

Al-Tabari The fame of abu-Ja'far Muhammad ibn-Jarir al-Tabari (838-923), who was born in Tabaristan, that

mountainous district of Persia along the south coast of the Caspian Sea, rests on his remarkably elaborate and accurate history *Tarikh al-Rusul w-al-Mulük\** (annals of the apostles and kings), as well as on his commentary on the Koran.<sup>4</sup> In his commentary, originally composed on a far larger scale, he made not only the earliest but the largest collection of exegetical traditions. This became a standard work upon which later koranic commentators drew. His monumental work on universal history, the first complete one in the Arabic tongue, likewise served as a source for later historians such as Miskawayh, ibn-al-Athir and abu-al-Fida'. Like most Moslem historians, al-Tabari arranges the events chronologically, tabulating them under the successive years of the Hijrah. In fact his history begins with the creation of the world and goes down to A.H. 302 (915). The same annalistic method was used by al-Wáqidi and others before him as well as by Miskawayh, ibn-al-Athir, abu-al-Fida'<sup>5</sup> (1273-1331) and al-Dhahabi<sup>6</sup> (1274-1348) after him. The original edition of al-Tabari's history is said to have been ten times as long as the surviving edition. His favourite method of presenting the narrative is that of the religious tradition, by isnád. Besides making use of the literary sources extant in his day, such as the works of ibn-Ishaq, al-Kalbi, al-Wáqidi, ibn-Sa'd and ibn-al-Muqaffa' and of several historical translations from Persian, al-Tabari procured data for his history from oral traditions collected during his travels and from the lectures of the sheikhs under whom he studied in

<sup>1</sup> Less correctly "ibn-Miskawayh"; Yáqüt, vol. ii, p. 88; Qifti\* p. 331.

<sup>2</sup> *Tajárib al-Umam*, ed. A. F. Amedroz, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1914-21); tr. D. S. Margoliouth, *The Experiences of the Nations*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1921).

<sup>3</sup> Ed. de Goeje et al., 15 vols. (Leyden, 1879-1901).

<sup>4</sup> Jami' al-Bay an fi Tafsir al-Quran, 30 vols. (Buláq, 1323-9).

<sup>5</sup> See his Ta'rikh, also called al-Alukhtasar fi Akhbár al-Bashar, 4 vols. (Constantinople, 1286).

<sup>6</sup> See his Duwal al-J slam, 2 vols. (Haydarabad, 1337).

Baghdad and other intellectual centres. His journeys in quest of learning covered Persia, al-Tráq, Syria and Egypt.<sup>1</sup> On one occasion he was forced to sell the sleeves of his shirt to buy bread for sustenance. An idea of his industry and enthusiasm for learning may be gained from the popular tradition that during forty years al-Tabari wrote forty sheets every day.<sup>2</sup>

Abu-al-Hasan <sup>c</sup>Ali al-Mas'udi,<sup>3</sup> styled the "Herodotus of the Ai-Mas\*udi Arabs", inaugurated among the Arabs the topical method of writing history. Instead of grouping his events around years he grouped them around dynasties, kings and peoples, a treatment followed by ibn-Khaldün and minor historians. He was also one of the first to make good use of the historical anecdote. Young al-Mas<sup>c</sup>Gdi, who belonged to the rationalistic school of Mu'tazi-lites, undertook the usual scholar's "journey in quest of learning" which carried him from his native Baghdad<sup>4</sup> into almost every country of Asia and even into Zanzibar. The last decade of his life he spent in Syria and Egypt compiling the material into a thirty-volume work, surviving in an epitome, Murüj al-Dhahab wa-Ma ádin al-Jawhar <sup>5</sup> (meadows of gold and mines of gems). In this encyclopaedic historico-geographical work the author, with catholicity and scientific curiosity, carried his researches beyond the typically Moslem subjects into Indo-Persian, Roman and Jewish history. At its beginning he states



that what is now dry land had been sea, and what is sea had been dry land—all as a result of physical forces. Before his death at al-Fustat in 957 al-Mas'Gdi summarized his philosophy of history and nature and the current philosophers' views on the gradation between minerals, plants and animals <sup>6</sup> in al-Tanblh w-al-Ishraf? comparable to Pliny's.

Arabic historical composition reached its highest point in al-Tabari and al - Mas'Gdi, and after Miskawayh (f 1030) started on a rapid decline. ʿIzz-al-Dīn ibn-al-Athīr<sup>8</sup> (1160-1234) abridged in his al-Kāmil fi al-Taʾrīkh\* (the complete book

<sup>1</sup> Fihrist, p. 234.

<sup>2</sup> Yāqūt, vol. vi, p. 424.

<sup>3</sup> A descendant of 'Abdullah ibn-Mas'ūd.

\* Fihrist, p. 154, wrongly makes him a native of al-Maghrib. Cf. Yāqūt, vol. v,

p. 148.

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<sup>5</sup> Ed. and tr. de Meynard and de Courteille, 9 vols. (Paris, 1861—77)

» Cf. Ikhwān, Rasail, vol. i, pp. 247-8. (Leyden, 1893-4).

<sup>7</sup> Ed. de Goeje

<sup>8</sup> Born in Jazirat ibn-'Umar on the Tigris, flourished in al-Mawṣil. Ibn-Khallikān, vol. ii, pp. 35-6.

\* Ed. C. J. Tornberg, 13 vols. (Leyden, 1867-74).

of chronicles) al-Tabari's work and continued the narrative to 1231. The period dealing with the Crusades is an original contribution. Ibn-al-Athīr produced another

important work, *Usd al-Ghabah*<sup>x</sup> (the lions of the thicket), a collection of 7500 biographies of the Companions. His contemporary Sibṭ ibn-al-Jawzī<sup>2</sup> (1186-1257), who was born in Baghdad and whose father was a Turkish slave, wrote among other works the *Mir'at al-Zamān fī Tdrikh al-Ayyam*, a universal history from Creation to 1256.<sup>3</sup> To this late 'Abbasid period belongs the chief judge of Syria, ibn-Khallikān (j- 1282), the first Moslem to compose what we might term a dictionary of national biography. Before him Yâqūt had issued his dictionary of literati and ibn-'Asakir (f 1177) had sketched in eighty volumes the biographies of distinguished men connected with his native town, Damascus.<sup>4</sup>

Like most other treasures of historical and geographical lore written in a foreign tongue the works of al-Tabari, al-Mas'ūdi, ibn - al - Athir and their confrères remained inaccessible to medieval Occidental readers. In modern times many have been translated in part or in full into modern European tongues. This, however, does not mean that the Arabic authors made no contribution to the social sciences. In appreciating their work in this and other disciplines Sarton<sup>5</sup> enthusiastically declares: "The main task of mankind was accomplished by Muslims. The greatest philosopher, al-Fârâbî, was a Muslim; the greatest mathematicians, Abu Kamil<sup>6</sup> and Ibrâhîm ibn Sinân,<sup>7</sup> were Muslims; the greatest geographer and encyclopaedist, al-Mas'ūdî, was a Muslim; the greatest historian, al-Tabari, was still a Muslim".

## Theology

We now come to those intellectual activities evoked by the predilections of the Arabs as Arabs and Moslems.

Foremost among the sciences thus developed were theology, tradition,

<sup>1</sup> 5 vols. (Cairo, 1280).

\* This surname he owes to his famous maternal grandfather, ibn-al-Jawzi (f 1201).

<sup>3</sup> Extracts ed. and tr. in *Recueil des historiens des croisades: historiens orientaux*,

vol. iii (Paris, 1884). Pt. 8 was reproduced in facsimile by James R. Jewett (Chicago, 1907).

<sup>4</sup> *Al-Tarikh al-Kabir*, ed. 'Abd-al-Qadir Badran and Ahmad 'Ubayd (Damascus. 1329-51) > first seven volumes.

<sup>5</sup> *Introduction to the History of Science*, vol. i (Baltimore, 1927), p. 624.

<sup>6</sup> Shujâ' ibn-Aslam of Egypt, who at the beginning of the tenth century perfected al-Khwarizmi's algebra.

<sup>7</sup> Grandson of Thâbit ibn-Qurrah, lived 908-46. His quadrature of the parabola was the simplest ever made before the invention of integral calculus.

jurisprudence, philology and linguistics. Most of the scholars in this field were of Arab descent, in contrast to the physicians, astronomers, mathematicians and alchemists cited above, who were of Syrian, Jewish or Persian origin.

The attention and interest of the Moslem Arabs were drawn quite early to those branches of learning motivated by the religious impulse. The necessity of comprehending and explaining the Koran soon became the basis of intensive

theologic as well as linguistic study. Contact with Christendom provoked in the first century at Damascus theological speculation leading to the rise of the Murji'ite and Qadarite schools of thought.<sup>1</sup>

Next to the holy Koran, the sunnah,<sup>2</sup> i.e. the deeds, utterances and silent approval {taqrir} of the Prophet, stood as the most important doctrinal source. Transmitted at first orally, this sunnah of Muhammad was fixed during the second century in the form of written hadiths. A hadith, therefore, is a record of an action or saying of the Prophet. In a more general sense it may be used also for a record of an action or saying of any of his Companions or their Successors.<sup>3</sup> Though not equally canonical with the Koran, the Prophetic hadith nevertheless exerted an equally great influence over the development of Islamic thought. In the hadith Muhammad speaks; in the Koran Allah speaks. In the hadith the meaning only is inspired; in the Koran the meaning and the word are inspired. The bases of jurisprudence {fiqh} as well as of theology are firstly in the Koran, secondly in the hadith. Among all peoples Moslems stand unique in having developed a science (\\bn) out of their mass of religious traditions {hadiths}.

To the pious Moslem the science of hadith soon became The the science par excellence.<sup>4</sup> It was primarily in its quest h<sub>ad</sub>i<sub>th</sub> that the would-be scholar, in response to the famous Prophetic tradition, "Seek ye learning though it be in China", undertook long and tiresome journeys throughout the extensive domains of the caliphate. Such journeys {al-rihlah fi talab al-ilm}\*

<sup>1</sup> Other Moslem sects will be treated in the following chapter.

<sup>2</sup> Etymologically meaning “custom,” “use”, the word has developed several technical meanings. In opposition to Shi\*ah, it is used for the theory and practice of the catholic Moslem community.

\* See above, p. 242.

<sup>4</sup> Consult the chapter on 'Um in Bukhari, vol. i, pp. 19  
seQ .

<sup>5</sup> Consult ibn-Khaldun, Muqaddamah, p. 47<sup>^</sup>; Alfred Guillaume, The Traditions of Islam (Oxford, 1924), pp. 68-9.

were elevated into acts of consummate piety; he who lost his life through their perils was likened to him who lost it in the holy war.

In the course of the first two and a half centuries after Muhammad the records of his sayings and doings increased in number and copiousness. Whenever an issue—religious, political or sociological—arose each party sought to find authority for its views in some word or decision of the Prophet, be it real or fictitious. The political rivalry between 'Ali and abu-Bakr, the struggle between Mu'awiyah and 'Ali, the enmity between the 'Abbasids and Umayyads, the burning question of superiority between Arabs and non-Arabs—these and similar exigencies provided ample opportunity for the fabrication of hadlths and motivated their dissemination. Moreover, the manufacture of hadlths had commercial value and many teachers thrived on it. Before his execution at al-Kufah in 772, ibn-abi-al-'Awja' confessed to having circulated 4000 traditions of his own invention.<sup>1</sup> In general more weight is attached to the Madlnese than to the Kufan school of traditions, yet here again not all transmitters are above suspicion. Abu-

Hurayrah, for instance, a Companion of the Prophet and a most zealous propagator of his words and deeds, reputedly transmitted some 5374 hadlths,<sup>2</sup> many of which were unquestionably foisted on him after his death.

'A'ishah transmitted 2210 traditions, Anas ibn-Malik 2286 and 'Abdullah ibn-'Umar ibn-al-Khattab 1630.<sup>3</sup>

Every perfect hadlth consists of two parts: a chain of authorities (isnad) and a text (matn). The text follows the chain and should be in direct address: A related (haddatha) to me that B related to him, on the authority of C, on the authority of D, on the authority of E, who said .... The same formula was used in historiography and in wisdom literature. In all these fields criticism was usually external, being limited to a consideration of the reputation of the transmitters, who are at the same time guarantors, and to the possibility of their forming an uninterrupted chain leading back to the Prophet. On the basis of such criticism hadlths are classified as genuine (sahlh), fair (ha san)

<sup>1</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, p. 376, copied by ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi, p. 3. Cf. Baghdadi, ed. Hitti, p. 164.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Ilajar, Isabah, vol. vii, p. 201. His title "abu-Hurayrah", "father of the kitten", was due to his fondness for cats; ibn-Qutaybah, Ma'arif, p. 141; ibn-Sa'd, vol. iv, pt. 2, p.

55. <sup>3</sup> Nawawi, pp. 165, 358. and weak

(da'if).<sup>1</sup> The ludicrous extreme to which this external criticism may lead is illustrated in the story of a traditionist who accepted a large cup of wine offered him by a Christian, and when reminded that this was a prohibited drink bought by the Christian's slave from a Jew his excuse was: "We traditionists consider as authority such men as Sufyan ibn-'Uyaynah and Yazid ibn-Harun. Are we then to believe a Christian, on the authority of his slave, on the

authority of a Jew? By Allah, I drank it only because of its weak isnadV'<sup>2</sup>

The third Moslem century saw the compilation of the various The six collections of hadiths into six books which have since become books standard. Of "the six books" the first and most authoritative is that of Muhammad ibn-Isma'Il al-Bukhari (810-70).<sup>3</sup> Al-Bukhari, who was a Persian, selected out of the 600,000 traditions he collected from 1000 sheikhs in the course of sixteen years of travel and labour in Persia, al-Traq, Syria, al-Hijaz and Egypt some 7397 traditions<sup>4</sup> which he classified according to subjectmatter, such as prayer, pilgrimage and holy war. Before committing a tradition to writing it was al-Bukhari's wont to perform the ceremonial ablution and prayer.<sup>5</sup> His collection has acquired a quasi-sacred character. An oath taken on it is valid, as if taken on the Koran itself. Next to the Koran this is the book that has exerted the greatest influence over the Moslem mind. Its author's tomb outside of Samarqand is still visited by pilgrims who accord him the next rank in Islam after Muhammad.

Al-Bukhari's corpus of traditions came near finding a rival in the collection of Muslim ibn-al-Hajjaj (f 875) of Naysabur, a work on which Islam has conferred the same title, al-Sahih^ the genuine collection. The contents of Muslim's Sahih are almost identical with al-Bukhari's, though the isnad may vary. Next to these "two genuine books" come four others which Moslems have elevated to canonical rank. These are the Sunan of abu-Dawud of al-Basrah (f 888), the Jami of al-Tirmidhi (j\* ca. 892), the Sunan of ibn-Majah of Qazwin (f 886) and the Sunan of al-Nasa'i, who died at Makkah in 91 \$.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Consult ibn-'Asakir, Tarikh, vol. ii, pp. 18 seq.-, ibn-Khaldun, Muqaddamah, PP Nawafi, Halb ah, p. 17. <sup>3</sup> Al-Jdmi' al-Sahih, 8 vols. (Bulaq, 1296).

<sup>4</sup> Nawawi, pp. 93, 95'6- \* Ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, p. 231.

<sup>6</sup> Various editions of these works, but none critical, have been printed or litho graphed in Egypt and India.

Besides clarifying and supplementing the Koran, the hadith literature provided the Moslem community with apostolic precept and example covering the whole range of man's duty. Even such trivial questions as the proper way of cutting a watermelon before eating it or cleaning the teeth with a toothpick— "proper" from the standpoint of the Prophetic practice—did not escape the traditionists' researches. The nocturnal journey vaguely reported in one solitary koranic verse (17:1) developed in the hadith an extensive and colourful crop of elaborate traditions with which the Occident has long been familiar as reflected in the pages of Dante. The hadith literature further served as a vehicle for transmitting wise sayings, anecdotes, parables and miracles—all ascribed to Muhammad—from various secular and religious sources, including the New Testament. In abu-Dawud<sup>7</sup> a version of the Lord's Prayer is put in Muhammad's mouth. In al-Bukhari<sup>8</sup> and Muslim,<sup>9</sup> Muhammad, on the authority of abu-Hurayrah, upon whom many such pious and edifying sayings are fathered, once commended "him who gives alms only in secret, so that his left hand knows not what his right hand does". Nothing could better illustrate the general receptivity and hospitality of Islam as a system. In the hadith lore the Moslem home found its fireside literature and the Moslem community its Talmud.

Jurisprudence



After the Romans the Arabs were the only medieval people who cultivated the science of jurisprudence and evolved therefrom an independent system. Their system, *fiqh*<sup>4</sup> as they called it, was primarily based on the Koran and the *sunnah* (i.e. *hadith*), styled *usul* (roots, fundamental principles) and influenced by the Greco-Roman system. *Fiqh* was the science through which the canon law of Islam (*sharia*)<sup>5</sup>; the totality of Allah's commandments as revealed in the Koran and elaborated in the *hadith*, was communicated to later generations. These commandments embrace regulations relative to ritual and worship (*ibadat*), civil and legal obligations (*muamalat*) and punishments (*uqubat*).

Of the six thousand verses or thereabouts in the Koran only about two hundred, most of which occur in the Madinese portion, especially *surahs* two and four, may be classed as strictly legislative. It soon became evident that these statutes were not sufficient to cover all cases—civil, criminal, political, financial—which might and did arise under the new conditions and varied situations encountered in Syria, al-'Iraq and other conquered territories. Hence the necessity for speculation. Speculation gave rise to two new fundamental principles: *qiyas*, i.e. analogical deduction, and *ijma'* i.e. catholic consent. Thus did Moslem jurisprudence come to have two new roots in addition to the Koran and tradition: analogy and consensus of opinion. As for *ray*, i.e. private judgment, though often resorted to, it was never quite elevated to the rank of a fifth fundamental principle. A traditional discourse between the Prophet and his appointee as *qadi* over al-Yaman, Mu'adh ibn-Jabal, sums up the Magna Charta of Islamic legal fundamentals:

Muhammad: "How wilt thou decide when a question arises?"

Mu'adh: "According to the Book of Allah".

Muhammad: "And if thou findest naught therein?"

Muddh: "According to the sunnah of the Messenger of Allah".

Muhammad: "And if thou findest naught therein?"

Mu adh: "Then shall I apply my own reasoning".<sup>1</sup>

The leader of the 'Iraq school, which insisted on the right of The four juridical speculation in contrast to the Madinah school, which schools\* attached special importance to hadlth,<sup>2</sup> was abu-Hanifah, properly al-Nu'man ibn-Thabit. Abu-Hanifah was the grandson of a Persian slave,<sup>3</sup> flourished in al-Kufah and Baghdad and died in 767. A merchant by profession, abu-Hanifah became the first and most influential jurist in Islam. His teachings he imparted orally to his disciples, one of whom, abu-Yusuf (f 79\$), has preserved for us in his Kitab al-Kharaj^ the chief views of the master. Abu-Hanifah did not actually introduce, though he emphasized strongly, the principle of analogical deduction leading to what we call legal fiction. He also insisted upon the right of "preference" (istihsan)? departure from analogy on grounds of equity. Like his competitor Malik of al-Madinah he had no idea of forming a juridical school (madhhab, rite), yet abu-Hanifah became the founder of the earliest, largest and most

<sup>1</sup> Shahrastani, p. 155.    <sup>2</sup> Ibid. pp. 160-61; ibn-Khaldun, Muqaddamah, p. 372.

' Fikrist, p. 201; ibn-Khallikan, vol. iii, p. 74.  
(Cairo, 1346.)

' The istihsdn of the Hanafite school, the istislhd (principle of public advantage) of the Malikite school, and the ray are often treated as synonyms of qiyas (analogy).

tolerant school of Islam. To his rite almost one half of the world of Sunnite Islam adheres. It was officially recognized in the territories of the defunct Ottoman empire as well as in India and Central Asia. As a system of religio-juridical thought von Kremer considers it "the highest and loftiest achievement of which Islam was capable".<sup>1</sup>

The leader of the Madinah school, supposedly better acquainted with the Prophet's life and frame of mind, was Malik ibn-Anas (ca. 715-95<sup>2</sup>), whose al-Muwatta<sup>2</sup> (the levelled path), next to the compendium of Zayd ibn-'Ali<sup>4</sup> (f 743), is the oldest surviving corpus of Moslem law. This monumental work, with its 1700 juridical traditions, codified the sunnah, outlined the first formula of the ijma (consensus of opinion) as prevalent in al-Madinah and became the canon for the Malikite rite. This rite drove from the Maghrib and Andalusia the two minor systems of al-Awza'i (f 774) and of al-Zahiri<sup>5</sup> (815-83) and to the present day prevails throughout northern Africa, with the exception of Lower Egypt, and in eastern Arabia. After abu-Hanifah and Malik juridico-theological studies so developed as to become the most extensively cultivated branch of Arabic learning.

Between the liberal Traq and the conservative Madinah schools there arose one which professed to have found the golden mean by accepting speculation with certain reservations. This is the ShafVite school, whose founder was Muhammad ibn-Idris al-Shafi'i. Born in Ghazzah (767), al-Shafi'i, who belonged to the Quraysh family, studied under Malik in al-Madinah, but the main scenes of his activity were Baghdad and Cairo.<sup>6</sup> He died in 820 at Cairo, where his tomb at the foot of al-Muqattam is still the object of pilgrimage. The Shafi'i rite still dominates Lower Egypt, eastern Africa, Palestine, western and southern Arabia, the coastal regions of India and the East Indies. Its adherents number about

105,000,000 as against 180,000,000 Hanafites, 50,000,000 Malikites and 5,000,000 Hanbalites.

<sup>1</sup> Culturgeschichte, vol. i, p. 497\*  
Khallikan, vol. ii, p. 201.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ibn-

<sup>8</sup> Delhi, 1302. See also his al-Mudawwanah al-Kubra (Cairo, 1323), 16 vols.

<sup>4</sup> Majmu al-Fiqh, ed. E. Griffini (Milan, 1919).

<sup>6</sup> Dawud ibn-Khalaf al-Iṣbahani (ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 312), surnamed al-Ḥāhiri because he regarded only the literal (zahir) meaning of the Koran and hadith as authoritative. Though his teachings found a most gifted protagonist in ibn-Hazm of Cordova (994-1064), yet they did not survive.

• Yaqut, Udaba', vol. vi, pp. 367 seq.', ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, pp. 215-16.

The last of the four rites into which the whole Moslem community, exclusive of the Shi'ah, has divided itself is the Han-balite, which takes its name from Ahmad ibn-Hanbal, a student of al-Shāfi'i and a representative of uncompromising adherence to the letter of the hadith. Ibn-Hanbal's conservatism served as the bulwark of orthodoxy in Baghdad against the Mu'tazilite innovations. Though subjected to the inquisition (mihnaK) and put in chains under al-Ma'mūn, scourged and imprisoned by al-Mu'tasim, ibn-Hanbal stubbornly refused to recant and allowed no modification in the traditional form of confession.<sup>1</sup> The 800,000 men and 60,000 women who are estimated to have attended his funeral in 855 at Baghdad<sup>2</sup> testify to the hold this stalwart champion of orthodoxy had on public imagination. Posterity venerated his tomb as that of a saint and honoured him with the same title, imam, bestowed upon

abu-Hanifah, Malik and al-Shâfi'i. For a long time the collection of over 28,000 traditions, Musnad<sup>1</sup> ascribed to him, enjoyed special renown. Today, however, the Hanbalite rite claims no considerable following outside of the Wahhabis.

In the principle of *ijvtâ* , elaborated by al-Shafi i, the Moslem community hit upon a most useful theological expedient which has enabled its members to adapt their institutions and beliefs to. varied and novel situations in a changing world. In a community where no church, no clergy and no central authority are recognized, deference to public opinion naturally assumes an important rôle. It was through this principle that the vulgate text of the Koran was canonized, the six canonical books of hadithswere approved, the miracles of the Prophet were accepted, lithographic reproductions of the Koran were authorized and the necessity of belonging to the Quraysh was dispensed with in favour of the Ottoman caliphs. The Shi'ites, it should be remembered, have their own rite and do not accept *ijmâ* . To it they oppose the absolute authority and judgment of the infallible imams, all descendants of 'Ali. With the above four rites, which crystallized traditional dogma and everything necessary for doctrinal and juridical development, the door of *ijtihad*, the right of further interpreting the Koran and the sunnah or of forming a new opinion by applying analogy, was for ever closed to the

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-\*Asâkir, Tdrikh, vol. ii, pp. 41 ^7-

» Ibn-Khallikân, vol. i, p. 2S. <sup>3</sup> 6 vols. (Cairo, 1313).

Sunnite community; but the Shi'ites still have their mujtahids, learned men who are qualified to act as spokesmen for the sublime and hidden imam and to interpret his ideas.

The indebtedness of the Islamic juridical system to the Roman-Byzantine laws, which had been for centuries naturalized in Syria, Palestine and Egypt, has not yet been made the object of the study it deserves by competent scholarship. Certain orientalists see Roman influence not only in particular regulations but also, and what is more important, in questions of principle and methodology. The Justinian Code recognized the method of analogical deduction and private judgment. Certain Byzantine regulations may have left their impress upon the Islamic statutes of purchase, sale and other commercial relationships; others relating to guardianship and will, letting and hiring may have passed through Judaic, rabbinical or talmudic, channels. But it is surprising that the Roman influence is not better marked in the system of the Syrian al-Awza'i (f 774), who laboured in Beirut,<sup>1</sup> as late as the sixth century still the seat of a flourishing school of Roman law, and came very near establishing a fifth rite.

## Ethics

The prescriptions of the canon law (xhart ah) discussed above regulate for the Moslem his entire life in its religious, political and social aspects. They govern his marital and civic relations as well as his relations with non-Moslems. Accordingly ethical conduct derives its sanctions and inhibitions from the sacred law. All man's acts are classified under five legal categories: (1) what is considered absolute duty (Jard), embracing actions the commission of which is rewarded and the omission punished by law; (2) commendable or meritorious actions {mustahabb}, the performance of which is rewarded but the omission not punished;

(3) permissible actions {jaiz, mubah}, which are legally indifferent;

(4) reprehensible actions (makruh), which are disapproved but not punishable; (5) forbidden actions {haram}, the doing of which calls for punishment.

Ethical works based on the Koran and tradition, though numerous, do not exhaust all the material in Arabic literature dealing with morals {akhlaq}? There are at least three other types. Several works deal with good morals and refinement of spirit and deportment {adab}. These are based mainly on Indo-

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 493.      ' See Hajji Khalfah, vol. i, pp. 200-205.

Persian anecdotes, proverbs and wise sayings. Al-Durr ah al-Yatimah<sup>10</sup> by ibn-al-Muqaffa' (executed \*.757), which eulogizes temperance, courage, liberality and proficiency in discourse and business, may be taken as a specimen of this type. A similarly popular philosophy of morality is found in the fables and proverbs of Luqman, the TESop of the Arabs. An ethical treatise by the celebrated constitutional theorist of Baghdad, al-Mawardi (t 1058),<sup>11</sup> rich in wise sayings of the Prophet and the Companions, is still popular as a textbook in Egyptian and Syrian schools. Another type of work is philosophical, ultimately going back to Aristotle through Neo-Platonic and Neo-Pythagorean sources. These Greek works, headed by Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics translated as Kitab al-Akhldq by Hunayn or his son Ishaq,<sup>12</sup> laid the foundation of Arabic moral philosophy (ilm al-akhldq), whose aim, like that of Aristotle and Plato, was to facilitate the attainment of earthly felicity. Of this school the most notable representative was the historian Miskawayh, whose Tahdhib al-Akhldq\* is the best ethical work of the strictly philosophical or Neo-Platonic type composed by a Moslem. We also have in the epistles of the Brethren of Sincerity, of which the ninth is devoted to

akhlaq, a characteristic deposit of Greek ethics pervaded by astrological and metaphysico-psychological speculation. The Brethren show special enthusiasm for Christ and Socrates as examples of the moral man, though to the Sunnites Muhammad and to the Shi'ites \*Ali are the perfect men. The third type of ethics may be styled the mystico-psychological. Its exponents were al-Ghazzali and various Sufi authors whom we shall consider in a forthcoming chapter. In all these Moslem moral philosophies certain virtues such as resignation, contentment and endurance are admired; vices are treated as maladies of the soul with the moral philosopher as the physician; and the classification is founded on the analysis of the faculties of the soul, each faculty having its own virtue and its own vice.

In the early centuries of the 'Abbasid power an interesting Literature movement developed among the subjected races, particularly the Persians, whose object it was to combat the feeling of superiority which those Moslems of Arabian descent, real or claimed, had long manifested. The movement took its name Shu'ubiyah (belonging to the peoples, non-Arabs) from a koranic verse (49 : 13) the purport of which was to inculcate the brotherhood and equality of all Moslems. Whilst among the Kharijites and the Shi'ites it took dynastic and political aspects, and among some Persians it took religious aspects involving heresy and zindiqism, yet the form which al-Shu'ubiyah assumed in general was that of literary controversy. It derided the Arab pretension? to intellectual superiority and claimed for non-Arabs superiority in poetry and literature. The non-Arab cause was championed by such leaders as al-Biruni and Hamzah al-Isfahani, whilst the Arab side was represented by several of Arabian as well as others of Persian extraction, including al-Jahiz,<sup>1</sup> ibn-Durayd,<sup>2</sup> ibn-Qutaybah and al-Baladhuri. It was in- connection with



such controversial questions that some of the earliest original pieces of Arabic literature were composed.

What we call “Arabic literature” was no more Arabian than the Latin literature of the Middle Ages was Italian. Its producers were men of the most varied ethnic origins<sup>3</sup> and in its totality it represents the enduring monument of a civilization rather than of a people. Even such disciplines as philology, linguistics, lexicography and grammar, which were primarily Arabian in origin and spirit and in which the Arabs made their chief original contribution, recruited some of their most distinguished scholars from the non-Arab stock. Al-Jawhari (fta. 1008), whose lexicon,<sup>4</sup> arranged in the alphabetical order of the final radical letters of the words, served as a model for later lexicographers, was a Turk from Farab.<sup>5</sup> His contemporary ibn-Jinni (J\* 1002), who adorned the Hamdanid court at Aleppo and whose chief merit was a philosophical treatment of philology, was the son of a Greek slave.<sup>6</sup>

## Belles-lettres

Arabic literature in the narrow sense of adab (belles-lettres) began with al-Jahiz (f 868-9), the sheikh of the Basrah litterateurs, and reached its culmination in the fourth and fifth

<sup>1</sup> Bay an, vol. iii, pp. 9 seq.

<sup>2</sup> A lexicographer, died at Baghdad, 933. He wrote against the Shu'ublyah Kitab al-Ishtiqaq, ed. Wiistenfekl (Gottingen, 1854).

<sup>3</sup> In his Muqaddamah, pp. 477-9, ibn-Khaldun has a chapter headed “Most of the learned men in Islam were non-Arabians ”.

<sup>4</sup> Sihah, 2 vols. (Bulaq, 1292).  
vol. ii, p. 266.

<sup>4</sup> Yaqut, Udaba ,

- Ibid. vol. v, p. 15.

Moslem centuries in the works of Badf al-Zaman al-Hamadhani (969-1008), al-Tha'alibi<sup>13</sup> of Naysabur (961-1038) and al-Hariri (1054-1122). One characteristic feature of prose-writing in this period was the tendency, in response to Persian influence, to be affected and ornate. The terse, incisive and simple expression of early days had gone for ever. It was supplanted by polished and elegant style, rich in elaborate similes and replete with rhymes. The whole period was marked by a predominance of humanistic over scientific studies. Intellectually it was a period of decline. It supported a literary proletariat, many of whose members, with no independent means of livelihood, roamed from place to place ready to give battle over linguistic issues and grammatical technicalities or to measure poetical swords over trivial matters with a view to winning favours from wealthy patrons. This period also saw the rise of a new form of literary expression, the maqamah.

Badi\* al-Zaman (wonder of the age) al-Hamadhani is credited with the creation of the maqamah (assembly), a kind of dramatic anecdote in the telling of which the author subordinates substance to form and does his utmost to display his poetical ability, learning and eloquence. In reality such a form of composition as the maqamah could not have been the creation of any one man; it was a natural development of rhymed prose and flowery diction as represented by ibn-Durayd and earlier stylists. Al-Hamadhani's work<sup>14</sup> served as a model for al-Hariri of al-Basrah,<sup>15 16</sup> whose Maqamat\* for more than seven centuries were esteemed as the chief treasure, next to the Koran, of the literary Arabic tongue. In these maqamat of al-

Hariri and other writers there is much more than the elegant form and rhetorical anecdote which most readers consider the only significant feature. The anecdote itself is often used as a subtle and indirect way of criticizing the existing social order and drawing a wholesome moral. Since the days of al-Hamadhani and al-Hariri the maqamah has become the most perfect form of literary and dramatic presentation in Arabic, a language which has never produced real drama. Early Spanish and Italian tales of the realistic or picaresque type display clear affinities with the Arabic maqamah.

Before the maqamah was developed Arabic literature saw the rise of its greatest literary historian, abu-al-Faraj al-Isbahani, or al-Isfahani (ca. 897-967), a lineal descendant of Marwan, the last Umayyad caliph. Abu-al-Faraj flourished in Aleppo, where he produced his Kitab al-Aghani<sup>x</sup> (book of songs), a veritable treasury of poetry and literature and an indispensable source for the study of Moslem civilization. In his Muqaddamah <sup>2</sup> ibn-Khaldun rightly calls it "the register of the Arabs" and "the final resource of the student of belles-lettres". His Aleppine patron Sayf-al-Dawlah al-Hamdani bestowed on the author a thousand gold pieces as a reward for this work,<sup>3</sup> and the Andalusian al-Hakam II sent him a like sum. A Buwayhid vizir, al-Sahib ibn-'Abbad (f 995), who is said to have been wont to take with him on his journeys thirty camel-loads of books, dispensed with them all on receiving a copy of al-Aghani, which he thereafter carried about alone.<sup>4</sup>

The

A rabian Nights

In this period, shortly before the middle of the tenth century, the first draft of what later became Alf Laylah wa-Laylah<sup>^</sup> (a thousand and one nights) was made in al-'Iraq. The basis

of this draft, prepared by al-Jahshiyari<sup>6</sup> (f 942), was an old Persian Ni<yAt,Hazar Afsdna (thousand tales), containing several stories of Indian origin. Al-Jahshiyari added other tales from local storytellers.<sup>7</sup> The Afsana provided the general plot and framework as well as the nomenclature for the leading heroes and heroines, including Shahrazad. As time went on additions were made from numberless sources: Indian, Greek, Hebrew, Egyptian and the like. Oriental folk-tales of every description were absorbed in the course of centuries. The court of Harun al-Rashid provided a large quota of humorous anecdotes and love romances. The final form was not taken by the Nights until the later Mamluk period in Egypt. Its heterogeneous character has inspired the

<sup>1</sup> 20 vols. (Bulaq, 1285); Briinnow edited vol. 21 (Leyden, 1888) and Guidi issued index (Leyden, 1900).

<sup>2</sup> P. 487. <sup>8</sup> Yaqut, vol. v, p. 150; ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, p. II.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, p. 11, cf. vol. i, p. 133.

<sup>6</sup> Bulaq editions A. H. 1251 (1835) and 1279 fixed the vulgate Arabic text.

• Better known for his Kitab al-IVuzara -w-al-Kuttdb, ed. Hans v. Mzik (Leipzig, 1926).

<sup>7</sup> Fihrist, p. 304. Cf. Mas'udi, vol. iv, p. 90.

facetious words of a modern critic who has described the Arabian Nights as Persian tales told after the manner of Buddha by Queen Esther<sup>1</sup> to "Haroun Alraschid" in Cairo during the fourteenth century of the Christian era. First translated into French by Galland,<sup>2</sup> the Nights have worked

their way into all the principal languages of modern Europe and Asia and have taken their place as the most popular piece of Arabic literature in the West, vastly more popular than in the Moslem East itself. In English the first important translation, incomplete but accurate, is that of Edward William Lane.<sup>3</sup> It has a valuable and full commentary and has gone through several editions. John Payne's translation,<sup>4</sup> the best in English, is complete but has no commentary. In his rendition Sir Richard F. Burton<sup>5</sup> follows Payne's except in the poetical part and endeavours to improve on it by attempting to reproduce the Oriental flavour of the original.

The pre-Islamic poetry of the heroic age of the *jâhilîyah* Poetry provided models for the Umayyad bards, whose imitations of the antique odes were treated as classical by the 'Abbasid poets. The pietistic spirit fostered by the new régime of the *banu-al-'Abbâs*, the foreign cultural and religious influences streaming mainly from Persia, and the patronage of the caliphs under whom the poets flourished and whom they were expected to laud and glorify, tended to produce deviation from the old trodden paths of classicism and develop new forms of poetical expression. Nevertheless poesy proved the most conservative of all Arab arts. Throughout the ages it never ceased to breathe the spirit of the desert. Even modern Arabic versifiers of Cairo, Damascus and Baghdad feel no incongruity in introducing their odes by apostrophizing the deserted encampments (*atlal*) of the beloved, whose eyes they still liken to those of wild cows (*maha*). Other than poetry, law—particularly in its marital ordinances is perhaps the only field in which the old desert elements have succeeded in perpetuating themselves.

The earliest exponent of the new style in poetry was the blind Persian *Bashshâr ibn-Burd*, who was put to death in

783 under al-Mahdi, according to some for satirizing his vizir but more

<sup>1</sup> Of. Fihrist, p. 304, l. 16, with Tabari, vol. i, p. 688, ll. 1, 12-13, and p. 689, l. 1. ' 12 vols. (Paris, 1704-17).

<sup>8</sup> 3 vols. (London, 1839-41). Ed. with illustrations by E. S. Poole, 3 vols. (London, 1859). Rev. by E. S. Poole, 3 vols. (London, 1883). Several later reprints

' 9 vols. (London, 1882-4). ' vols. (London and Benares , 1885-8). probably on account of his zindiqism, Zoroastrian or Manichaean secret views. Bashshar, who once thanked Allah for having made him blind "so that I need not see that which I hate",<sup>1</sup> was a rebel against the archaic formulas of ancient poetry.<sup>2</sup> Another early representative of the new school was the half-Persian abu-Nuwas<sup>3</sup> (f ca. 810), the boon companion of Harun and al-Amin and the poet in whose songs love and wine found their best expression. The name of abu-Nuwas has lived to the present day in the Arabic world as a synonym for clown; in reality he has few rivals in amorous sentiment, erotic expression and elegant diction. He is the lyric and bacchic poet par excellence of the Moslem world. The many songs on the beauty of boys attributed to this dissolute favourite of the 'Abbasid court, as well as his poems in praise of wine (khamrlyat\ which have not ceased to enchant those who read and drink, throw interesting light upon contemporaneous aristocratic life.<sup>4</sup> The ghazal of abu-Nuwas, short poems of love ranging from five to fifteen verses, follow the model of Persian bards, who developed this verse form long before the Arabs.

Just as the witty and licentious abu-Nuwas represented the lighter side of court life, so did his ascetic contemporary abu-al-'Atahiyah<sup>5</sup> (748-^ . 828), a potter by profession, give expression to pessimistic meditations on mortality which the

common man of religious mentality entertained. The soul of this scion of the Bedouin tribe of 'Anazah rebelled against the frivolous high life of Baghdad, where he lived, and although Harun assigned to him a yearly stipend of 50,000 dirhams, he adopted the garb of a dervish and produced those ascetic and religious poems (zuhdt-yat') which entitle him to the position of father of Arabic sacred poetry.<sup>6</sup>

The provinces, particularly Syria, reared during the 'Abbasid period a number of first-class poets, among whom the most renowned were abu-Tammam (j- ca. 845) and abu-al-'Ala'.

<sup>1</sup> Aghdni, vol. iii, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Consult the collection edited by Ahmad H. al-Qirni as Bashshar ibn-Burd: Shi'ruhu wa-Akhbaru (Cairo, 1925); Aghdni, vol. iii, pp. 19-73, vol. vi, PP- 47\*53; ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 157; ibn-Qutaybah, Shi'r, pp. 476-9.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Hasan ibn-Hani'; ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 240.

<sup>4</sup> Consult his Diwan, ed. Mahmud Wa?if (Cairo, 1898); Aghdni, vol. xviii, pp. 2-8; ibn-Qutaybah, Shir, pp. 501-25.

<sup>6</sup> Isma'il ibn-al-Qasim. On his life see Aghdni, vol. iii, pp. 126-83; Mas'udi, vol. vi., pp. 240-50, 333-40, vol. vii, pp. 81-7; ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, pp. 125-30.

<sup>a</sup> Consult his Diwan (Beirut, 1887).

Abu-Tammam's father, who kept a wine shop in Damascus, was a Christian by the name of Thadus (Thaddaios), which the son changed to Aws when he embraced Islam.<sup>1</sup> Abu-Tammam was a court poet in Baghdad. His title to fame rests

as much on his Diwan<sup>2</sup> as on his compilation of Diwan al-Hamasah\* poems celebrating valour in battle. This Diwan embraces gems of Arabic poetry. The collection of Hamasah^ poems of the same description by the other court poet, al-Buhturi (820-97), <sup>15</sup> inferior to that of abu-Tammam, after which it was modelled.

The patronage accorded by the 'Abbasid caliphs, vizirs and governors to poets, whom they employed as encomiasts, not only made the panegyric {madih} an especially favourite form of poetical composition but led poets to prostitute their art, and resulted in that false glitter and empty bombast often said to be characteristic of Arabic poetry. 'Abbasid poetry, not unlike Arabic poetry of other periods, was moreover mainly subjective and provincial in character, full of local colour but unable to soar above time and place to gain a position among the timeless and landless offspring of the Muses.

<sup>1</sup> See Aghani, vol. xv, pp. 99-108; Mas'udi, vol. vii, pp. 147-67; ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, pp. 214-18. 2  
Ed. Shahin 'Atiyah, (Beirut, 1889).

<sup>3</sup> Ed. as Ash'ar al-Hamasah by Freytag (Bonn, 1828), supplemented by a commentary in 2 vols. (Bonn, 1847-51).

<sup>4</sup> Photographic reproduction with indexes by Geyer and Margoliouth (Leyden, T909).

## THE OLDEST REPRESENTATION OF THE CAESAREAN SECTION



From al-Birûni, al-<sup>^</sup>kâr al-Baqiyah, MS. dated A.H. 707 (1307-8), in the Library of the University of Edinburgh

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### EDUCATION

The child's education began at home. As soon as he could speak it was the father's duty to teach him "the word" (al-kalimahy. La ilaha illa-l-Ldh (no god whatsoever but Allah). When six years old the child was held responsible for the ritual prayer. It was then that his formal education began.<sup>1</sup>

#### Elementary

The elementary school {kuttab} was an adjunct of the mosque, if not the mosque itself. Its curriculum centred upon the Koran as a reading text-book. With reading went writing. On visiting Damascus in 1184 ibn-Jubayr<sup>2</sup> noticed that the writing exercises by the pupils were not from the Koran but from secular poetry, for the act of erasing the word of Allah might discredit it. Together with reading and penmanship the students were taught Arabic grammar, stories about the prophets—particularly hadiths relating to Muhammad—the elementary principles of arithmetic, and poems, but not of erotic character. Throughout the whole curriculum memory work was especially emphasized. Deserving pupils in the elementary schools of Baghdad were often rewarded by being paraded through the streets on camels whilst almonds were thrown at them. In one instance the shower had tragic results by destroying the eye of a young scholar.<sup>3</sup> Similar scenes enacted in honour of young pupils who have memorized the Koran are not infrequent today in Moslem lands. In certain cases the scholars were granted a

whole or partial holiday whenever one of them had finally mastered a section of the Koran.

Girls were welcome to all the religious instruction in the lower grades of which their minds were capable, but there was no special desire to guide them further along the flowery and thorny path of knowledge. For after all was not the centre of a woman's sphere the spindle?<sup>4</sup> The children of the wealthy had private

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ghazzali, *Ihya*, vol. i, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> P. 272.

<sup>3</sup> Aghani. vol. xviii, p. ioi.  
1. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Muharrad, p. 150,

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tutors (sing, *mu addid*) who instructed them in religion, polite literature and the art of versification. Very commonly these tutors were of foreign extraction. The ideals of aristocratic education may be ascertained from the instructions given by al-Rashid to the tutor of his son al-Amin :

Be not strict to the extent of stifling his faculties or lenient to the point of making him enjoy idleness and accustom himself thereto. Straighten him as much as thou canst through kindness and gentleness, but fail not to resort to force and severity should he not respond.<sup>1</sup>

The rod was considered a necessary part of a teacher's equipment and, as is evident from the above, had the caliph's approval for use on his children. In his chapter on the parental management of children in *Risalat al-Siyasah*? ibn-Sina speaks of "seeking the aid of the hand" as a valuable auxiliary of the educator's art.

The teacher in the elementary school, called mu allim, sometimes faqlh on account of his theological training, came to occupy a rather low status socially. "Seek no advice from teachers, shepherds and those who sit much among women",<sup>3</sup> admonished a favourite adage. A judge under al-Ma'mun went so far as to refuse to admit teachers' testimonies as satisfactory evidence in court. A whole body of anecdotes in Arabic literature developed round the teacher as a dunce. "More foolish than a teacher of an elementary school"<sup>4</sup> acquired proverbial usage. But the higher grade of teachers were on the whole highly respected. They evidently were organized into a sort of a guild, and the master would grant a recognized certificate (ijdzati) to those students who satisfactorily passed the prescribed course of study under him. In his treatise on pedagogy al-Zarnuji,<sup>5</sup> who wrote in 1203, devotes a section to the high regard in which a student should hold the profession of teaching, quoting the adage attributed to \* Ali: "I am the slave of him who hath taught me even one letter". Al-Zarnuji's is the best known of some two score Arabic treatises on education, most of which have survived in manuscript form.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mas'udi, vol. vi, pp. 321-2; ibn-Khaldun, Muqaddamah, pp. 475-6.

<sup>2</sup> Ed. Luwis Ma'luf in al-Mashriq, vol. ix (1906), p. 1074.

<sup>3</sup> Jahiz, Bay an, vol. i, p. 173.

<sup>4</sup>

<sup>5</sup> L<sup>oc</sup>\_ Clt

» Ta'dm al-Mutdallim Tariq al-Ta'allum, ed. C. Caspari (Leipzig, 1838), pp. 14-TO. See also Ghazzali, vol. v, pp. 8-11.

<sup>8</sup> For a list see Khalil A. Totah, *The Contribution of the Arabs to Education* (New York, 1926). pp. 67-76.

institutions The first prominent institution for higher learning in Islam was t<sup>h</sup>e Bayt al-Hikmah (the house of wisdom) founded by al-Ma'mūn (830) in his capital. Besides serving as a translation bureau this institute functioned as an academy and public library and had an observatory connected with it. The observatories, which sprang up at this time, it should be remembered, were also schools for teaching astronomy, just as the hospitals, which also made their first appearance at this period, served as centres for medical studies. But the first real academy in Islam<sup>1</sup> which made provision for the physical needs of its students and became a model for later institutions of higher learning was the Nizâmîyah, founded in 1065-7 by the enlightened Nizâm-al-Mulk, the Persian vizir of the Saljûq Sultans Alp Arslan and Malikshâh and the patron of 'Umar al-Khayyâm. The Saljuqs, like the Buwayhids and other non-Arab sultans who usurped the sovereign power in Islam, vied with each other in patronizing the arts and higher education, evidently as a means of ingratiating themselves with the populace. The Nizâmîyah was consecrated as a theological seminary (jnadrasah), particularly for the study of the Shâfi'i rite and the orthodox Ash'ari system. In it the Koran and old poetry formed the backbone of the study of the humanities (ilm al-adab), precisely as the classics did later in the European universities. The students boarded in this academy and many of them held endowed scholarships. It is claimed that certain details of its organization appear to have been copied by the early universities of Europe.<sup>2</sup> That the students cherished a measure of esprit de corps is evidenced by the rough treatment accorded a representative of the court who came to seal the door of a

room formerly occupied by a scholar who died in 1187 leaving no heirs.<sup>3</sup>

The Nizâmīyah was a theological institution recognized by the state. Ibn-al-Athīr<sup>4</sup> cites the incident of a lecturer (mudarris) who received his appointment but could not perform his duty pending confirmation from the caliph. Evidently one lecturer was appointed at a time.<sup>5</sup> The lecturer had under him two or more répétiteurs (sing, mu Id, repeater)<sup>6</sup> whose duty consisted in reading over the lecture after class and explaining it to

<sup>1</sup> Consult Suyufi, Husn, vol. ii, pp. 156-7. Cf. Qazwini, Athdr, p. 276.

\* Reuben Levy, A Baghdad Chronicle (Cambridge, 1929), p. 193.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. xi, p. 115.

<sup>4</sup> Vol. xi, p. 100.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. x, p. 123.  
vol. iii, p. 430.

<sup>6</sup> See ibn-Khallikan,

the less-gifted students. Ibn-Jubayr<sup>1</sup> once attended a lecture delivered after the mid-afternoon prayers by the ranking professor. The lecturer stood on a platform while the students sat on stools and plied him with written and oral questions till evening prayer. It was in this Nizamiyah that al-Ghazzali lectured for four years (1091-5).<sup>2</sup> In the chapter on learning with which he introduced his Ihya\* al-Ghazzali combated the idea that the imparting of knowledge was the object of education and emphasized the necessity of stimulating the moral consciousness of the student, thus becoming the first author in Islam to bring the problem of education into organic relation with a profound ethical system. Among the later eminent teachers of the Nizá-miyah

was Baha'-al-Din, Salah-al-Din's (Saladin's) biographer, who tells us in his reminiscences, as reported in ibn-Khallikán,<sup>4</sup> that to sharpen their memories a group of students once drank such a heavy dose of an infusion of anacardia<sup>5</sup> kernels that one of them lost his wits entirely and came naked to the class. When amidst the laughter of the class he was asked for an explanation, he gravely replied that he and his companions had tried the anacardia infusion, which made them all insane with the exception of himself, who had happily kept his senses.

Al-Nizamiyah survived the catastrophe that befell the capital at its capture by Hülágu in 1258, as it survived the later invasions by the Tartars, and was finally merged with its younger sister, al-Mustansiriyah, about two years after Timür Lang (Tamerlane) captured Baghdad in 1393. Al-Mustansiriyah derived its name from the next-to-last caliph, al-Mustansir,<sup>6</sup> who built it in 1234 as a seminary for the four orthodox rites. The building had a clock (doubtless of the clepsydra type) at the entrance, was equipped with baths and kitchens and included a hospital and a library. Ibn-Battütah,<sup>7</sup> who visited Baghdad in 1327, gives us a detailed description of the building. Renovated as a school in 1961 this structure and al-Q^r (palace) al- Abbasi, now a museum, are the only ones surviving from 'Abbasid days.

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 219-20.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, p. 246; al-Munqidh min al-Dalal (Cairo, 1329), pp. 29-30.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. i, pp. 43-9; Ayyuha al-Walad, ed. and tr.' Hammer-Purgstall (Vienna,

1838); tr. (Eng.) G. H. Scherer (Beirüt, 1933).  
iii, pp. 435 seq.

<sup>4</sup> Vol.

<sup>5</sup> Ar. balddhur, from Pers, balddur. The celebrated historian al-Baladhuri is said to have died as a result of drinking the juice of the anacardia (cashew nut). Hence his surname.

' Vol. ii, pp. 108-9.

- Abu-al-Fida', vol. iii, p. 179.

Besides the Nizâmîyah of Baghdad the Saljûq vizir is credited with establishing several other seminaries in Naysâbü'r and other towns of the empire. Prior to Salâh-al-Dîn he was the greatest patron of higher education in Islam. The Nizâmîyah type of madrasah spread over Khurasan, al-Trâq and Syria. Founding a madrasah was always considered a meritorious act in Islam. This explains the large number of such institutions reported by travellers. Ibn-Jubayr<sup>17</sup> counted in Baghdad about thirty schools; in Damascus, which then enjoyed its golden age under Salâh-al-Dîn, about twenty; in al-Mawsil, six or more; and in Hirns only one.

In all these higher institutions of theology the science of tradition lay at the basis of the curriculum, and memory work was especially stressed. In those days of no diaries and no memoranda the retentive faculties must have been developed to phenomenal limits, if we are to believe the sources. Al-Ghazzâli earned his title hujjat al-Islam (the authority of Islam) by memorizing 300,000 traditions. Ahmad ibn-Hanbal, it is said, knew by heart 1,000,000.<sup>18</sup> Al-Bukhâri was tested by one hundred traditions in which the chain of authorities (isnâd) of the one was affixed to the text (matri) of the other—all of which he straightened out nicely from memory.<sup>19</sup> Poets vied with tradition-ists in memory work. Having read a copy of a book loaned him by a bookseller, al-Mutanabbi' saw no more reason for buying the book, for its contents were already stored in his

mind. Anecdotes of a similar nature are told to prove the prodigious memories of abu-Tammâm and al-Ma'arri.

## Adult education

Adult education was nowhere carried on in a systematic way, but the mosques in almost all Moslem towns served as important educational centres. When a visitor came to a new city he could make his way to the congregational mosque confident that he could attend lectures on hadith. This is what al-Maqdisi<sup>4</sup> tells us he did on visiting distant al-Sus. This travelling geographer of the tenth century found in his native Palestine and in Syria, Egypt and Faris many circles (sing. halqaji) or assemblies (sing. majlis') centring upon faqlhs, Koran readers and littérateurs in the mosques.<sup>5</sup> The Imam al-Shâfi'i presided at such a halqah

at the Mosque of 'Amr at al-Fustât, where he taught various subjects every morning till his death in 820.<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Hawqal<sup>2</sup> mentions similar assemblies in Sijistân. Not only religious but linguistic and poetical subjects were treated in these assemblies.<sup>3</sup> Every Moslem had free admission to such lectures in the mosques, which remained until the eleventh century the extension school of Islam.

These mosque circles bring to mind another type of coterie, chiefly literary, which met in the homes of the aristocracy and cultured society under the name of majdlis al-adab?<sup>1</sup> literary salons. These gatherings begin to appear early under the 'Ab-básids. In the presence of several early caliphs poetical contests, religious debates and literary conferences were often held. We owe a few surviving works to such debates.<sup>5</sup>

Mosques also functioned as repositories for books. Through Libraries gifts and bequests mosque libraries became



especially rich in religious literature. Among others the historian al-Khatib al-Baghdádi (1002-71) willed his books “as a waqf [mortmain] for the Moslems”, but they were housed in the home of a friend of his.<sup>6</sup> Other libraries established by dignitaries or men of wealth as semi-public institutions housed collections bearing on logic, philosophy, astronomy and other sciences.<sup>7</sup> Scholars and men of standing had no difficulty in finding access even to private collections. Al-Mawsil had before the middle of the tenth century a library, built by one of its citizens, where students were even supplied with free paper.<sup>8</sup> The library (khizanat al-kutub') founded in Shiraz by the Buwayhid 'Adud-al-Dawlah (977-82) had its books arranged in cases and listed in catalogues and was administered by a regular staff.<sup>9</sup> In the same century al-Basrah had a library whose founder granted stipends for scholars working in it.<sup>10</sup> In al-Rayy there flourished at the same time a “home of books” with over four hundred camel-loads of manuscripts listed in a ten-volume catalogue.<sup>11</sup> Libraries were used as meetingplaces for scientific discussion and debate. Yáqūt spent three years collecting material for his geographical dictionary from the

<sup>1</sup> Yáqūt, *Udaba*, vol. vi, p. 383; Suyufi, *Husn*, vol. i, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> P. 317.

<sup>3</sup> Yáqūt, vol. iv, p. 135' 11. 14-16, vol. vi, p. 432, 11. 14-16.

<sup>4</sup> Agháni, vol. xviii, p. 101.  
above, p. 354.

\* See

<sup>4</sup> Yáqūt, vol. i, p. 252, vol. iv, p. 287.

<sup>7</sup> For an illustration see *ibid.* vol. v, p. 467.

<sup>1</sup> Yáqūt, vol. ii, p. 420. ' Maqdisi, p. 449- See also Yáqūt, vol. v, p. 446.

<sup>10</sup> Maqdisi, p. 413. <sup>11</sup> Yáqūt, vol. ii, p. 315-

## Bookshops

### Paper

libraries of Marw and Khwarizm, whence he fled in 1220 at the approach of the Mongol hordes of Chingiz Khan, who committed all these libraries to the flames.

The bookshop as a commercial and educational agency also makes its appearance early under the 'Abbasids. Al-Ya'qubi<sup>1</sup> asserts that in his time (891) the capital boasted over a hundred book-dealers congregated in one street. Many of these shops, like their modern successors in Cairo and Damascus, were but small booths by the mosques, but some were undoubtedly large enough to act as centres for connoisseurs and bibliophiles. The booksellers themselves were often calligraphers, copyists and literati who used their shops not only as stores and ateliers but as centres for literary discussion. They occupied a not inconspicuous place in society. Yaqut started on his career as a book-dealer's clerk. Al-Nadim (f 995), also called al-Warraq (stationer), was evidently himself a librarian or book-dealer to whose catalogue we possibly owe that scholarly and remarkable work al-Fihrist. In this work<sup>2</sup> we read of an 'Iraqi bibliophile whose large trunk housed treasures of manuscripts which included parchments, Egyptian papyri, Chinese paper and leather scrolls, each bearing the name of the scribe attested by the notes of from five to six generations of learned men.

The common writing-material was parchment or papyrus down to the beginning of the third Moslem century. Certain official documents written on parchment and looted in the civil war between al-Amin and al-Ma'mun were later washed clean and sold again.<sup>3</sup> After the beginning of the third century some Chinese paper was imported into al-'Iraq, but soon the paper industry became indigenous. It was first into Samarqand, as we have already pointed out, that certain Chinese prisoners introduced in 751 the art of manufacturing paper from flax, linen or hemp rags.<sup>4</sup> The ancient Arabic word for paper, kaghad, is probably of Chinese origin through Persian. From Samarqand the industry soon passed to al-'Iraq. At the instance of the Barmakid al-Fadl ibn-Yahya, who had been governor of Khurasan in 794, the first paper-mill was established in Baghdad.<sup>5</sup> His brother Ja'far, Harun's vizir, had parchment replaced by paper in the

<sup>1</sup> P. 245.

<sup>2</sup> P. 40.

<sup>3</sup> Fihrist, p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> W. Barthold, *Turkestan down to the Mongol Invasion*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1928), pp. 236-7. Cf. Fihrist, p. 21.

<sup>5</sup> Ibn-Khaldun, *Muqaddamah*, p. 352.

government offices.<sup>1</sup> Other Moslem towns erected mills on the plan of those in Samarqand. A native factory arose in Tihàmah for the manufacture of paper from vegetable fibre.<sup>2</sup> At the time of al-Maqdisi<sup>3</sup> the Samarqand product was still considered the finest. But in the following century, the eleventh, even better paper was manufactured in such Syrian towns as Tripoli.<sup>4</sup> From Western Asia the industry made its way at the end of the ninth century into the Delta of Egypt, where several towns had been for a long time exporting to the Greek-speaking lands papyrus for writing-

material under the name qaràtis? By the end of the tenth century paper had succeeded in entirely displacing papyrus and parchment throughout the Moslem world.

That there was an élite of highly educated men under the first General 'Abbasids is fully recognized, but how high the general level of  $c_u^e v^{\circ} \textcircled{u}$  culture was among the masses is not so easy to determine. A story about a starving scholar of Baghdad who hesitated to sell his books even when his daughter was taken ill has been preserved in Yâqut.<sup>6</sup> The answers submitted by the educated slave girl Tawaddud to the questions of the savants as reported in The Thousand and One Nights (nos. 438-61) may be taken as an index of the degree of knowledge attained by the cultured person after Harun and down to the twelfth century.

According to Tawaddud intellect is of two kinds: one innate and the other acquired. Its seat is the heart, where God deposits it and whence it ascends to the brain. Man has three hundred and sixty veins, two hundred and forty bones and five senses. He is compounded of four elements: water, earth, fire and air. The stomach lies in front of the heart, to which the lungs are ventilators. The liver is the seat of compassion; the spleen, of laughter; and the two kidneys, of cunning. The head has five faculties: sensation, imagination, will, fancy and retention. The stomach is the home of all disease, and diet is the source of all healing. The planets are seven: the sun, the moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn.<sup>7</sup>

7 The very same planets of the Ptolemaic system. The last five were those known to the Assyrians and Babylonians; Jastrow, *Civilization of Babylonia*, p. 76i.

From T. IV. Arnold and A. Grohmann, "The Islamic Book" by permission of the Pegasus Press, Paris

A SILVER PORTRAIT COIN OF AL-MUTAWAKKIL (OF THE YEAR 855) WITH A TWO-POINTED BEARD, WEARING A LOW CAP OF THE SÄSÄNID TYPE

(Original in Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)

## CHAPTER XXIX

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF FINE ARTS

In his art as in his poetry the Arab, a Semite, revealed himself with a keen appreciation of the particular and the subjective and with a delicate sense for detail, but with no particular capacity for harmonizing and unifying the various parts into a great and united whole. However, in architecture and painting particularly, he did not so early attain a certain degree of progress, and stand still for ever after, as he did in his sciences after the tenth century.

#### Architecture

Of the architectural monuments which once adorned the city of al-Mansur and al-Rashid no trace has been left, whereas two of the noblest surviving structures of Islam, the Umayyad Mosque at Damascus and the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem, date from the earlier Umayyad period. The caliphal palace called the Golden Gate (bab al-dhahab) or Green Dome (al-qubbah al-khadra') erected by the founder of Baghdad, as well as his Palace of Eternity (qasr al - khuld) and the Rusafah 416

palace, built for the crown prince al-Mahdi;<sup>1</sup> the palaces of the Barmakids at al-Shammäsiyah;<sup>2</sup> the palace of the Pleiades (al-thurayya), on which al-Mu tadid (892-902), who

restored Baghdad as capital after Sāmarra, spent 400,000 dinars,<sup>3</sup> and his adjoining palace styled the Crown (al-tājfi\* completed by his son al-Muktafi (902-8); the unique mansion of al-Muqtadir (908—32) designated the Hall of the Tree {dar al-shajarali) on account of the gold and silver tree that stood in its pond; the Buwayhid mansion known by the name al-Mu'izziyah after Mu'izz-al-Dawlah (932-67), which cost 1,000,000 dinars<sup>5</sup>—all these and many others like them left no remains to give us an inkling of the splendour that was theirs. So complete was the destruction wrought by the civil war between al-Amln and al-Ma'mūn, by the final devastation of the capital by Hülāgu in 1258 and by natural causes that even the sites of most of these palaces cannot today be identified.

Outside of the capital no 'Abbāsid ruin can be dated with any degree of probability prior to the reigns of al-Mu'tasim (833-42), founder of Sāmarra, and of his son al-Mutawakkil (847-861), the builder of its great mosque.<sup>6</sup> This congregational mosque, which cost 700,000 dinars,<sup>7</sup> was rectangular and the multifoil arches of its windows suggest Indian influence. Neither here nor in the mosque at abu-Dulaf (also of the midninth century) near Sāmarra has any trace been found of the mihrāb (prayer niche) in the qiblah wall. The wall mihrāb seems to have been a Syrian invention, suggested in all likelihood by the apse in the Christian church.<sup>8</sup> Outside, against the wall of the great mosque of Sāmarra, rose a tower which is analogous to the ancient Babylonian ziggurat? This tower was copied by ibn-Tūlūn for the minaret of his mosque (876-9), in which the pointed arch appears for the third time in Egypt, after the repaired mosque of 'Amr (827) and the Nilometer (861). Such 'Abbāsid remains as have survived at al-Raqqah, of the late

<sup>1</sup> Al-Khatib (al-Baghdadi), vol. i, pp. 82-3.

' One of the eastern quarters of Baghdad.

<sup>3</sup> Mas'üdi vol. viii, p. 116. This palace was destroyed two centuries later.

< Khatib, vol. i, pp. 99 seq.  
p. 256.

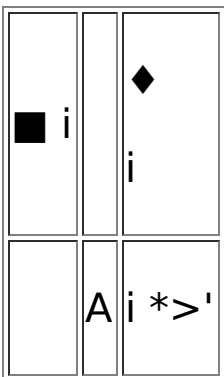
<sup>5</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix,

<sup>6</sup> Yaqübi, p. 260; Maqdisi, p. 122.  
vol. 111, p. 17.

<sup>7</sup> Yäqüt, Buldän,

<sup>8</sup> Ernest T. Richmond, Moslem Architecture, 623 to 1516 (London, 1926), p. 54; cf. Ernst Herzfeld, Erster vorläufiger Bericht über die Ausgrabungen von Samarra (Berlin, 1912), p. 10. See above, p. 261.

<sup>9</sup> Above, p. 262. This ancient minaret with its spiral outside stairway still exists under the name Malwiyah (the bent one).



eighth century, and at Samarra carry on the tradition of Asiatic, more particularly Persian, architecture in contrast to the Umayyad structures which bear clear traces of Byzantine-Syrian art. Under the Sasanid dynasty (A.D. 226-641) a distinctive type of Persian architecture was

developed, with ovoid or elliptical domes, semicircular arches, spiral towers, indented

## STAGE TOWERS, ZIGGURAT, OF THE ANU-ADAD TEMPLE AT ASHUR (A RECONSTRUCTION)

battlements, glazed wall-tiles and metal-covered roofs. This type became one of the most powerful factors in the formation of 'Abbasid art.

The theologians' hostility to all forms of representational Painting art<sup>1</sup> did no more stop its development along Islamic lines than did the more explicit koranic injunction against wine enforce prohibition in Moslem society. We have already noticed that al-Mansür set upon the dome of his palace the figure of a horseman which might have served as a weathercock, that al-Amin had his pleasure boats on the Tigris fashioned like lions, eagles and dolphins and that al-Muqtadir had a gold and silver tree with eighteen branches planted in a huge tank in his palace.

<sup>1</sup> Set above, pp. 209-71.

On either side of the tank stood the statues of fifteen horsemen, dressed in brocade and armed with lances, constantly moving as though in combat.

The builder of Samarra (836), the Caliph al-Mu'tasim, had the walls of his palace there ornamented like those of Qusayr 'Amrah with frescoes of nude female figures and hunting-scenes, probably the work of Christian artists. His second successor, al-Mutawakkil, under whom this temporary capital reached its zenith,<sup>1</sup> employed for the mural decoration of his palace Byzantine painters who had



no scruples against including among the many pictures a church with monks.<sup>2</sup>

In Islam painting was pressed into the service of religion at a rather late date and never became its handmaid as it did in Buddhism and Christianity. The earliest record of any pictorial representation of the Prophet was noted by an Arabian traveller of the late ninth century who saw it in the Chinese court,<sup>3</sup> but it may well have been produced by Nestorians. The many representations of the Buraq seem to have taken for their prototype, through Persian channels, Greek centaurs or the human-headed, winged beasts of the earlier Assyrians. Moslem religious painting, however, does not make its full appearance until the beginning of the fourteenth century. Its derivation was evidently from the art of the Oriental Christian churches, particularly the Jacobite and the Nestorian, as the researches of Arnold have shown,<sup>4</sup> and developed from book-decoration. In miniature illustration the Manichaeian influence is sometimes apparent.<sup>5</sup> Of the few Arabic works dealing with the history of Islamic painters unfortunately none have survived—so little has been the interest in the subject.

The oldest illustrated Arabic manuscript extant is al-Sufi's astronomy dated 1005 (now in Leningrad). In belles-lettres we have no work before the thirteenth and twelfth Christian centuries, as represented by Kallilah wa-Dimnah, al-Hariri's Maqamat, and al-Aghani\*. These miniatures reveal artists who worked under

<sup>1</sup> His buildings are discussed by Ya'qubi, pp. 266-7, and by Yaqut, vol. iii, pp. 17-18, who estimates that they cost al-Mutawakkil 294,000 (OCX) dirhams.

<sup>2</sup> Ernst Herzfeld, Die Malereien von Samarra (Berlin, 1927), pls. lxi, lxiii.

<sup>3</sup> Mas udi, vol. i, pp. 315-18.      <sup>4</sup> Painting in Islam  
(Oxford, 1928), ch. iii.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Thomas W. Arnold and Adolf Grohmann, The Islamic  
Book (London,  
1929), p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> For a 1217/18 miniature of the Prophet consult Bulletin  
de l'Institut d' Egypte, vol, xxviii (Cairo, 1946), pp. 1-5.

Original in Rashid-al-Dīn, /<fwz' al-Tawârīkh, MS. dated a.h.  
710 (1310 11),

Edinburgh University Library, Arabic No. 20

the influence of traditions derived from a Christian source or  
were Christians themselves. Such Moslems as cared to  
ignore the teaching of their theologians had first to employ  
Jacobite or Nestorian painters until the Moslems themselves  
had time to develop their independent artists. Persia with its  
old Indolranian instincts and traditions was particularly  
fertile in the

From Arnold and Grohmann, "The Islamic Book" (The  
Pegasus Press)

#### A SCENE FROM AL-HARIRI, MAQAMAH 19

A sick man, with his son behind his head, is visited by his  
friends MS., dated A.H. 734 (1334), in the National Library,  
Vienna

early production of such independent painters. But the prevailing idea that this production was due to non-conformist Shi'ite tendencies cannot be sound in view of the fact that Shi'ism did not prevail in Persia to the extent of becoming the state religion until the establishment of the Safawid dynasty in 1502.

## industrial arts

Since early antiquity the Persians have proved themselves masters of decorative design and colour. Through their efforts the industrial arts of Islam attained a high degree of excellence. Carpet-weaving, as old as Pharaonic Egypt, was especially developed. Hunting and garden scenes were favoured in rug designs, and alum was used in the dye to render the many colours fast. Decorated silk fabrics, the product of Moslem hand-loom in Egypt and Syria, were so highly prized in Europe that they were chosen by Crusaders and other Westerners, above all textiles, as wrappings for relics of saints.

In ceramics, another art as ancient as Egypt and Susa, the reproduction of the human form and of animals and plants, as well as geometric and epigraphic figures, attained a beauty of decorative style unsurpassed in any other Moslem art.<sup>1</sup> In spite of the prejudicial attitude of legists, which crystallized in the second and third Moslem centuries against plastic as well as pictorial art, pottery and metal-work continued to produce distinctive pieces second to none in the Middle Ages. Qashani tile, decorated with conventional flowers, which was introduced from Persia to Damascus, found great vogue, together with mosaic work, in exterior and interior decoration of buildings. Better than any others, Arabic characters lent themselves to decorative designs and became a powerful motif in Islamic art. They even became religious symbols. Particularly in

Antioch, Aleppo, Damascus and such ancient Phoenician towns as Tyre were the processes of enamelling and gilding glass perfected. Among the treasures of the Louvre, the British Museum and the Arab Museum of Cairo are exquisite pieces from Samarra and al-Fustat, including plates, cups, vases, ewers and lamps for home and mosque use, painted with brilliant radiant lustres and acquiring through the ages metallic glazes of changing rainbow hue.

The art of calligraphy, which drew its prestige from its object *caiii*-to perpetuate the word of God, and enjoyed the approval of the *graphy* Koran (68 : 1, 96 : 4), arose in the second or third Moslem century and soon became the most highly prized art.<sup>2</sup> It was entirely Islamic and its influence on painting was appreciable. Through it the Moslem sought a channel for his esthetic nature, which could not express itself through the representation of animate objects. The calligrapher held a position of dignity and honour far above the painter. Even rulers sought to win religious merit by copying the Koran. Arabic books of history and literature have preserved for us with honourable mention the names of several calligraphers/but kept their silence in the case of architects, painters and metal-workers. Among the founders of Arabic

<sup>1</sup> Gaston Migeon, *Les arts musulmans* (Paris, 1926), pp. 36-7•

<sup>2</sup> See Qalqashandi, vol. iii, pp. 5 seq., vol. ii, pp. 430 seq.

calligraphy were al-Rayhâni<sup>1</sup> (Rihâni, j- 854), who flourished under al-Ma'mûn and perfected the style named after him; ibn-Muqlah (886-940), the 'Abbâsid vizir whose hand was cut off by the Caliph al-Râdi and who could still write elegantly with his left hand and even by attaching a pen to the stump of his right one;<sup>2</sup> and ibn-al-Bawwâb<sup>3</sup> (j\* 1022 or

1032), the son of a porter of the audience chamber of Baghdad and inventor of the muhaqqaq style. The last penman of the 'Abbasid period to achieve distinction was Yâqût al-Musta'simi, the court calligraphist of the last 'Abbasid caliph, from whose name the Yâqûti style derives its designation. Judging by the surviving specimens of the penmanship of Yâqût<sup>4</sup> and other renowned calligraphers of yore the artistic merits cannot be placed high. Calligraphy is perhaps the only Arab art which today has Christian and Moslem representatives in Constantinople, Cairo, Beirût and Damascus whose productions excel in elegance and beauty any masterpieces that the ancients ever produced.

## Music

Not only calligraphy but its associate arts, colour decoration, illumination, and the whole craft of bookbinding, owed their genesis and bloom to their relation to the sacred book. Under the late 'Abbâsids began the art of book-decoration and Koran illumination which reached its highest development in the Saljûq and Mamlûk periods. Here again the pictorial art of the Nestorians and Jacobites was evidently the main influencing factor. -The Moslem gilder {niudhahhib), who thus arose after the calligrapher, ranked second to him in importance. After the Koran the art was extended to include profane manuscripts.

The legists' disapproval of music was no more effective in Baghdad than it had been before in Damascus. The 'Abbasid al-Mahdi began where the last Umayyads ended. He invited and patronized Siyât<sup>5</sup> of Makkah (739-85), "whose song warmed the chilled more than a hot bath",<sup>6</sup> and his pupil Ibrâhîm al-Mawsili (742-804), who after his master became the patriarch of classical music. When

young, Ibrâhîm, a descendant of a noble Persian family,<sup>7</sup> was kidnapped outside al-Mawsil and during

<sup>1</sup> Fihrist, p. 119; Yâqût, Udaba, vol. v, pp. 268 seq.

\* Ibn-Khallikân, vol. ii, p. 472; Fakhri, pp. 368, 370-71; Yâqût, vol. iii, p. 150.

11. 8-10. <sup>3</sup> Ibn-Khallikân, vol. ii, pp. 31 seq.', Nuwayri, vol. vii, pp. 3-4,

<sup>4</sup> See B. Moritz, Arabic Paleography (Cairo, 1905), pl. 89.

<sup>6</sup> 'Abdullâh ibn-Wahb, a freedman of Khuzâ'ah; Aghâni, vol. vi, p. 7.

• Aghâni, vol. vi, p. 8, 11. 4-5, quoted by Nuwayri, vol. iv, p. 289.

' Fihrist, p. 140; ibn-Khallikân, vol. i, p. 14; Nuwayri, vol. iv, p. 320. his detention learned some of the brigands' songs. He was the first to beat the rhythm with a wand<sup>1</sup> and could detect one girl among thirty lute-players and ask her to tighten the second string of her ill-tuned instrument.<sup>2</sup> Later, al-Rashîd took Ibrâhîm into his service as boon companion, bestowed on him 150,000 dirhams and assigned him a monthly salary of 10,000 dirhams. From his patron the artist received occasional presents, one of which is said to have amounted to 100,000 dirhams for a single song. Ibrâhîm had an inferior rival in ibn-Jâmi', a Qurayshite and stepson of Siyât. In the judgment of the 'Iqd "Ibrâhîm was the greatest of the musicians in versatility, but ibn-Jâmi' had the sweetest note".<sup>3</sup> When a favoured court minstrel was asked by Hârûn for his opinion of ibn-Jâmi', his reply was: "How can I describe honey, which is sweet however you taste it?"<sup>4</sup>

The refined and dazzling court of al-Rashid patronized music and singing, as it did science and art, to the extent of becoming the centre of a galaxy of musical stars.<sup>5</sup> Salaried musicians accompanied by men and women slave singers thrived in it and furnished the theme for numberless fantastic anecdotes immortalized in the pages of the *Aghâni*? 'Iqd, *Fihrist*, *Nihâyah*, and, above all, the *Arabian Nights*. Two thousand such singers took part in a musical festival under the caliph's patronage. His son' al-Amîn held a similar night entertainment in which the personnel of the palace, both male and female, danced till dawn.<sup>7</sup> While the army of al-Ma'mûn was investing Baghdâd al-Amîn sat pathetically in his palace on the bank of the Tigris listening to his favourite singing girls.<sup>8</sup>

Another protégé of al-Rashîd was Mukhâriq (f ca. 845), a pupil of Ibrâhîm. When young, Mukhâriq was bought by a woman singer who heard him in his father's butcher shop crying in his beautiful and powerful voice his father's meats. He later passed into the possession of Hârûn, who freed him, rewarded him with 100,000 dinars<sup>9</sup> and honoured him with a seat by the caliph's side. One evening he went out on the Tigris and

<sup>1</sup> 'Iqd, vol. iii, p. 240, l. 4. Cf. above, p. 275.  
vol. v, p. 413 "Vql. 111, p. 239.  
Cf. *Aghâm*, vol. vi, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Aghâni*,  
Loc. cit.

<sup>5</sup> 'Iqd, vol. iii, pp. 239 seq.

f ,

- Besides being a treasure-house of information on almost every phase of Arab social life, this "book of songs" is also a history of music from pre-Islamic days to the time of the author, al-Isfahani (897-977) > the greatest music historian

the Arabs produced. ' Above, p. 303. 8  
Mas'udi, vol. vi, pp. 426-30.

<sup>8</sup> Aghâni vol. xxi, p. 226, vol. viii, p. 20.

started to sing. Immediately torches began to move to and fro in the streets of Baghdad in the hands of people anxious to hear the master-singer.<sup>1</sup>

Al-Ma mün and al-Mutawakkil had as a cup companion Ishâq ibn-Ibrâhîm al-Mawsili (767-850), dean of the musicians of his age.<sup>2</sup> After his father, Ishâq personified the spirit of classical Arabic music. As an all-round musician he was "the greatest that Islam had produced".<sup>3</sup> He claimed, as did also his father and Ziryâb, that it was the jinn who prompted his melodies.

These and other virtuosi of the halcyon days who won undying fame as companions to the caliphs were more than musicians; they were endowed with keen wits and retentive memories well stocked with choice verses of poetry and delightful anecdotes. They were singers, composers, poets and scholars well versed in the scientific lore of the day. Under them stood the instrumentalists (sing, dârib^, among whom the lute was generally most favoured; the viol (rabatf) was used by inferior performers. Then came the singing girls (sing. qaynah\ who as a rule performed while concealed behind curtains. Such girls came to be a necessary adornment of the harem and their keeping and training developed into an important industry. For one educated by Ishâq, a messenger of the governor of Egypt offered 30,000 dinars, which sum was matched by an envoy of the Byzantine emperor and increased to 40,000 by a messenger of the ruler of Khurâsân. Ishâq solved the problem by freeing the girl and marrying her.<sup>4</sup> °



The caliphal house in Baghdâd, more than that of Damascus, developed several distinguished lutanists, singers and composers.' Of all the 'Abbâsids Ibrâhîm ibn-al-Mahdi, brother of Hârûn and in 817 rival caliph of al-Ma'mûn, acquired the greatest fame as musician-singer.<sup>5</sup> Al-Wâthiq (842-7), who performed on the lute and composed a hundred melodies,<sup>6</sup> was the first caliph musician. After him both al-Muntasir (861-2) and al-Mu'tazz (866-9) showed some poetical and musical talent.<sup>7</sup> But the only real caliph musician was al-Mu'tamid (870-92), in whose

<sup>1</sup> Aghâni, vol. xxi, pp. 237-8. Cf. Nuwayri, Nihâyah, vol. iv, p. 307

<sup>2</sup> See ibn-Khallikân, vol. i, pp. 114 seq.- Fihrist, pp. 140-41, • Aghâni, vol. v, pp 52 seq.-, Nuwayri, vol. v, pp. i seq.

' Farmer, Arabian Music, p. 125.  
276-9.

« Fakhri, pp.

Ibn-Khallikân, vol. i, pp. 12 seq.-, Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 1030 seq.

• Aghâni, vol. viii, p. 163, quoted by Nuwayri, vol. iv, p. 198.

<sup>7</sup> Nuwayri, vol. iv, p. 199.

presence the geographer ibn-Khurdadhbîh delivered his oration on music and dance, a notable contribution to our knowledge of their state at that time.<sup>1</sup>

Among the many Greek works translated in the golden age Musical of the 'Abbasids were a few dealing with the speculative theory <sup>theorists</sup> of music. Two such Aristotelian works were done into Arabic under the titles Kitab al-Masa'il

(Problemata) and Kitab fi al-Nafs (De anima}<sup>2</sup> by the famous Nestorian physician Hunayn ibn-Ishaq (809-73), who also translated a work by Galen under the title Kitab al-Sawt (De voce}. Euclid had two titles ascribed to him in Arabic, Kitab al-Nagham (book of melody), a pseudo-Euclidian work, and Kitab al-Qanun (canon).<sup>3</sup> Aristoxenus, of the fourth century B.C., was known chiefly by his Kitab al-Iqa (rhythm)<sup>4</sup> and Nicomachus, Aristotle's son, through Kitab al-Muslqi al-Kablr (opus major on music).<sup>0</sup> The Brethren of Sincerity (tenth century), some of whom were evidently musical theorists, classified music as a branch of mathematics and venerated Pythagoras as the founder of its theory.<sup>6</sup> It was from these and other Greek works that the Arab authors acquired their first scientific ideas on music and became schooled in the physical and physiological aspects of the theory of sound. The scientific-mathematical side of Arab music was therefore derived from the Greek, but the practical side, as the researches of Farmer<sup>7</sup> have shown, had purely Arabian models. About this time the word muslqi, later muslqa (music), was borrowed from the Greek and applied to the theoretical aspects of the science, leaving the older Arabic term ghtna , used hitherto for both song and music, to the practical art. Qltar (guitar) and urghun 'organ), as names of instruments, and other technical terms of Greek origin now appear in Arabic. The organ was clearly an importation from the Byzantines. Two organ constructors flourished in the twelfth century, abu-al-Majd ibn-abi-al-Hakam (fn80) of Damascus and abu-Zakariya' Yahya al-Bayasi, who was attached to the service of Salah-al-Din.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mas'udi, vol. viii, pp. 88-103.

<sup>2</sup> Possibly translated by Hunayn's son Ishaq (f 9<sup>10</sup>)

<sup>3</sup> Fihrist, p. 266; Qifti, p. 65.

<sup>4</sup> Fihrist, p. 270.  
vol. i, p. 153.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. p. 269.

\* Rasd'il,

<sup>7</sup> Arabian Music, pp. 200-201; "Music" in The Legacy of Islam, ed. Thomas Arnold and Alfred Guillaume (Oxford, 1931), pp. 35<sup>6</sup> se<F

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. ii, pp. 155, 163.

Musical writers after the Greek school were led by the philosopher al-Kindi, who flourished in the second half of the ninth century and whose works, as noted before, bear the earliest traces of Greek influence. Al-Kindi is credited with six works, in one of which we find the first definite use of notation among the Arabs. Not only al-Kindi but several of the leading Moslem philosophers and physicians were musical theorists as well. Al-Razi (865-925) composed at least one such work, cited by ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah.<sup>1</sup> Al-Farabi (f 950), himself an accomplished lute performer, was the greatest writer on the theory of music during the Middle Ages. Besides writing commentaries on various lost works of Euclid he produced three original works. Of these Kitab al-Muslqi al-Kabir<sup>2</sup> was the most authoritative in the East. In the West his compendium of sciences, Ihṣā al-'Ulum\* (De ġdentials), being the earliest and best known of the works dealing with music to be rendered into Latin, exerted powerful influence. Besides the writings of al-Farabi those of ibn-Sina (f 1037), who abridged earlier works and included in his al-Shifa a study of music, and of ibn-Rushd (f 1198) were translated into Latin and became text-books in Western Europe. As for al-Ghazzali (fin 1), it was his defence of al-sama (music and song)<sup>4</sup> that caused music to play such an important part in the ritual of the Sufi fraternities.

Ed. de Goeje (Leyden, 1889).

[2](#)

<sup>1</sup> Al-'Abbasi; Yaqut, vol. ii, pp. 156-7.

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Ed. de Goeje (Leyden, 1892).  
1891—2).

\* Ed. de Goeje (Leyden,

[4](#)

<sup>6</sup> Ed. de Goeje (Leyden, 1885).  
(Leyden, 1870).

\* Ed. de Goeje

[5](#)

<sup>7</sup> Vol. ii, p. 80. For an illustration see Dimashqi, Nukhbat  
al-Dahr fi 'Ajaib

[6](#)

al-Barr w-al-Bahr (St. Petersburg, 1866), p. 182.

[7](#)

(Cairo, 1280), vol. ii, p. 101.

[8](#) Vol. ii, p. 105.

[8](#)

• (Delhi, 1319), vol. i, p. 331.  
“knowledge”, “wisdom”

<sup>4</sup> Literally

[9](#)

- Literally “road to the watering-place”, “clear path to be followed”.

[10](#)

Ed. Shakib Arislan (Cairo).

[11](#)

Adab al-Dunya w-al-DIn, 16th ed. (Cairo, 1915)-

[12](#)

- Cf. Fihrist, p. 252. <sup>4</sup> Several Cairo editions, none of them critical.

[13](#)

The name means furrier; ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 5<sup>22</sup>- best-known work is Yalimat al-Dahr, 4 vols. (Damascus, 1302), an anthology of contemporary poets.

[14](#)

- Maqamat, ed. Muhammad 'Abduh (Beirut, 1889).

[15](#)

Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 68.

[16](#)

Ed. de Sacy, 2 vols. (Paris, 1847-53); tr. into English by Thomas Chenery and F. Steingass, 2 vols. (London, 1867-98).

[17](#)

P. 229,1. 10, p. 283,1. 8, p. 236,11. 1-2, p. 258,1. 20.

[18](#)

\* Ibn-Khalikân, vol. i, p. 28.  
pp. 230-31.

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-Khalikân, vol. ii,

[19](#)

D. 415-  
439, 1. 11.

‘ Maqdisi, pp. 182, 179, 1. 20, pp. 205,

Most of these technical treatises unhappily have been lost in the original. Arabic music, with its notation and its two constituent elements of *nagham* (melodic modes) and *zqa* (rhythmic modes), has been therefore transmitted by word of mouth only and has been finally lost. Arabic chants today are scant in melody but strong in rhythm, and no modern person can interpret properly the few surviving works on classical music or understand fully the meaning of their ancient designations of rhythm and their scientific terminology. Many such terms may be traced to Persian and Indian origins.

Vol. i, p. 320, 1. 26. <sup>2</sup> See above, p. 372, n. 1.

' Ed. 'Uthman Muhammad Amin (Cairo, 1931).

<sup>4</sup> *Ihya'*, vol. ii, pp. 238 seq.

## CHAPTER XXX

### MOSLEM SECTS

We have dwelt at some length on the first two and a half centuries of the 'Abbasid period (750-1000) because this was a formative period during which Moslem civilization received that distinctive stamp which it has retained down to our time. In theology and law, in science and philosophy, in literature and the humanities, Islam is today virtually what it was nine centuries ago. Its schools of thought, developed then, have persisted in some form to the present day. Among those schools the sects are the most important.

The Mu'tazilah started as a rigid puritanical movement assert- Rationing that the doctrine that the Koran was the uncreated word of God and eternal would compromise His unity, but developed orthodoxy later a rationalist wing

which accorded the products of human reason an absolute value above the Koran. Prompted by his Mu'tazilite judge ibn-abi-Duwad,<sup>1</sup> al-Ma'mun, whose philosophical interests raised the new creed to a state religion, issued in 827 a momentous proclamation declaring the dogma of "the creation \khalq\ of the Koran", in opposition to the orthodox view that in its actual form, in its Arabic language, the Koran is the identical reproduction of a celestial original.<sup>2</sup> This new dogma of "the creation of the Koran" soon became the touchstone of Moslem belief. Even judges had to pass its test. In 833 the caliph issued his infamous edict that no qadi who did not subscribe to the view of the creation of the Koran could hold his office or be appointed to one. At the same time he instituted the mihnah, an inquisitorial tribunal for the trial and conviction of those who denied his dogma.<sup>3</sup> Thus by a strange irony of fate did the movement which had a party standing for free-thought become a deadly instrument for suppressing thought.

Moslem This was not the first time Islam persecuted heresy. The inquisition Umayyad Hisham (724-43) had ordered the execution of al-Ja'd ibn-Dirham for teaching that the Koran was created<sup>4</sup> and had put to death Ghaylan al-Dimashqi (the Damascene) for maintaining the doctrine of free will;<sup>5 6</sup> and both al-Mahdi and al-Hadi had crucified a number of zindlqs? But this mihnah of al-Ma'mun was the first systematic inquisition into heresy and the earliest formal attempt to stamp it out.

The leading victim of the mihnah was Ahmad ibn-Hanbal,<sup>7</sup> whose bold and stubborn championship of the cause of conservative orthodoxy constitutes one of the glamorous pages in its history. The persecution of the orthodox continued under al-Ma'mun's two successors. But in the



second year of his reign, 848, al-Mutawakkil turned the tables on the Mu'tazilites and restored the old dogma.

Among the leaders of the Mu'tazilite school of this period was al-Nazzam (f ca. 845). This "sheikh of the Mu'tazilites" endeavoured to check the Persian dualistic tendencies in Islam and proclaimed that doubt was the first absolute requirement of knowledge.<sup>8 9</sup> His system recalls in the main Anaxagoras. Al-Nazzam counted among his pupils the encyclopaedist al-Jahiz of al-Basrah (•(• 868-9).<sup>®</sup> Another early leader was Mu'ammār ibn-'Abbad al-Sulami<sup>10 11</sup> (f ca. 835), a Qadarite who entertained Indian ideas.

The, On the theological side the man credited with exploding the

system Mu'tazilite theories and re-establishing the orthodox creed which prevails has since become the heritage of Sunni Islam was abu-al-Hasan 'Alī al-Ash'ari of Baghdad (f 935-6),<sup>®</sup> a descendant of the arbitrator abu-Musa. "Al-Mu'tazilah", in the words of a pious Moslem, "carried their heads high, but their dominion ended when God sent al-Ash'ari." Starting as a pupil of the Mu'tazilite theologian al-Jubba'i<sup>12</sup> (f 915-16), al-Ash'ari later in life changed fronts<sup>1</sup> and used in his polemics against his former masters the same weapons of logical and philosophical argumentation which they had introduced and developed. Thus he became, in addition to his other achievements, the founder of scholastic theology in Islam (kalam). After him the scholastic attempt to reconcile religious doctrine with Greek thought became the supreme feature of Moslem intellectual life as it was of medieval Christian life. To al-Ash'ari is also attributed the introduction of the formula *bi-la kayf* (without modality), according to which one is expected to accept the anthropomorphic expressions in the Koran without any explanation demanded or given. This new

principle served as a damper on free-thought and research. It was with a view to propagating the Ash'ari system of theology that the famous Nizamiyah seminary was established by the Saljuq vizir.

Al-Ash'ari was followed by al-Ghazzali<sup>2</sup> (L. Algazel), unquestionably the greatest theologian of Islam and one of its noblest and most original thinkers. It was al-Ghazzali who fixed the ultimate form of the Ash'ariyah and established its dicta as the universal creed of Islam. This "father of the church in Islam" has since become the final authority for Sunnite orthodoxy. Moslems say that if there could have been a prophet after Muhammad, al-Ghazzali would have been the man.

Abu-Hamid al-Ghazzali was born in 1058 at Tus, Khurasan, where he died in 1111. He reproduced in his religious experience all the spiritual phases developed by Islam. Here are his own words:

Ever since I was under twenty (now I am over fifty) . . . I have not ceased to investigate every dogma or belief. No Bapnite did I come across without desiring to investigate his esotericism; no Zahirite, without wishing to acquire the gist of his literalism; no philosopher,<sup>3</sup> without wanting to learn the essence of his philosophy; no dialectical theologian {mutakallim} without striving to ascertain the object of his dialectics and theology; no Sufi, without coveting to probe the secret of his Sufism; no ascetic, without trying to delve into the origin of his asceticism; no atheistic zindliq^ without groping for the causes of his bold atheism and zindiqism. Such was the unquenchable thirst of my soul for investigation from the early days of my youth, an

« From ghazzal (spinner), less correctly al-Ghazali;  
Muhammad ibn-abi-Shanab in Majallat al-Majma', vol. vii

(1927), pp. 224-6. Cf. Duncan B. Macdonald in Journal Royal Asiatic Society (1902), pp. 18-22.

<sup>8</sup> Neo-Platonist.

instinct and a temperament implanted in me by God through no choice of mine. [13](#) [14](#) [15](#) [16](#) [17](#)

Starting his religious life as orthodox, al-Ghazzali soon turned Sufi, and when still under twenty he had broken with all the past. In 1091 he was appointed lecturer at the Nizamlyah in Baghdad, where he became a sceptic. Four years later he returned to Sufism after a terrific spiritual struggle that left him a physical and moral wreck. Intellectualism had failed him. As a dervish he roamed from place to place enjoying peace of soul and acquiescence of mind. After about twelve years of retirement in various places, including two years of retreat in Syria and a holy pilgrimage, he returned to Baghdad to preach and teach. There he composed his masterpiece *Ihya 'Ulum al-Din*<sup>2</sup> (the revivification of the sciences of religion). The mysticism of this work vitalized the law, its orthodoxy leavened the doctrine of Islam. In it and in such other works of his as *Fatihah al-'Ulum*, *Tahafut al-Falasifah*, *al-Iqtisad fi al-'Itiqad*, orthodox speculation reached its culminating point. These works deposed fiqh from the high rank it had usurped, employed Greek dialectic to found a pragmatic system and made philosophy palatable to the orthodox school of theologians. Partly translated into Latin before 1150, they exerted marked influence on Jewish and Christian scholasticism. Thomas Aquinas, one of the greatest theologians of Christianity, and later Pascal were indirectly affected by the ideas of al-Ghazzali, who of all Moslem thinkers came nearest to subscribing to Christian views. The scholastic shell constructed by al-Ash'ari and al-Ghazzali has held Islam to the present day, but Christendom

succeeded in breaking through its scholasticism, particularly at the time of the Protestant Revolt. Since then the West and the East have parted company, the former progressing while the latter stood still.

Sufism<sup>18</sup> is the form which mysticism has taken in Islam. It is not so much a set of doctrines as it is a mode of thinking and feeling in the religious domain. Moslem mysticism represents a reaction against the intellectualism of Islam and the Koran and the formalism which developed as a consequence. Psychologically its basis should be sought in the human aspiration to a personal, direct approach to, and a more intense experience of, the deity and religious truth. Like other Islamic movements Sufism traces its origin to the Koran and the hadith. Such verses as 4 • 9<sup>^</sup> > 9 • 1<sup>13</sup>J 33 : 47« condemning “greed after the chance good things of this present life”, commending “those who turn to God” and emphasizing “trust in God, for God is a sufficient guardian”, are not lacking in the Koran. Muhammad’s own relation to God had a mystical aspect, namely, a direct consciousness of divine presence, and the Sufis came to consider themselves the true interpreters of the esoteric teaching of the Prophet as preserved in the hadith.

Beginning simply as an ascetic life, mainly contemplative, such as was commonly practised by Christian monks, Sufism during and after the second Islamic century developed into a syncretic movement, absorbing many elements from Christianity, Neo-Platonism, Gnosticism and Buddhism, and passing through mystical, theosophical and pantheistic stages. Wool (süf) was adopted as a dress in imitation of Christian monks, from whom was also borrowed the ideal of celibacy which orthodox Islam never encouraged. The practice of solitary meditations and prolonged vigils likewise show Syrian monastic influence.

The Sufi fraternity (turiqthf right way), which developed in the thirteenth century, with its master (shaykh} and novice (murid}, corresponding to the Christian relation of clergy and beginner, approaches the monastic orders, notwithstanding the apocryphal tradition “no monasticism \rahbanlyah\ in Islam”. The fraternity’s religious service called dhikr<sup>2</sup> is the only elaborate ritual in Islam and betrays Christian litanies as a source. The Sufi eschatological traditions with their Antichrist<sup>4</sup> suggest that the fraternities found many recruits among those newly converted to Islam from the older forms of monotheism.

The term Sufi appears first in Arabic literature in the middle Asceticism of the ninth century applied to a certain class of ascetics. The

<sup>1</sup> Sûr. 46:29 seq. <sup>2</sup> Remembrance and mention of God’s name; sûr. 33 ;41.

<sup>3</sup> Reynold A. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam* (London, 1914), P- 10.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Masih al-Dajjal, from Aramaic Meshiha Daggâla. Cf. Matt. 24 : 24; Rev.

13 : 1 -1 S; Dan. II : 36.  
vol. i, p. 233.

‘ Jàhiz, Bay (in,

first individual on whom the name Sufi was bestowed, and that by later tradition, was the famous occultist Jâbir ibn-Hayyân (fl. ca. 776), who professed an ascetic doctrine of his own. His contemporary Ibrâhîm ibn-Adham of Balkh (j- ca. 777) may be taken as a type of this early quietist asceticism (zuhd'j. In the Sufi legend of his conversion, evidently modelled upon the story of Buddha,<sup>1</sup> Ibrâhîm appears as a king’s son who, while hunting, heard some mysterious voice

warning him that he was not created for such a purpose. Thereupon the princely sportsman dismounted and for ever abandoned the path of worldly pomp for that of asceticism and piety. According to another legend his conversion came as a result of having observed from the window of his palace a beggar contentedly enjoying a meal of stale bread soaked in water and seasoned with coarse salt. When assured by the beggar that he was fully satisfied, Ibrâhîm put on haircloth and took to a wandering life.<sup>2</sup> After his Sufi conversion, Ibrâhîm migrated to Syria, where Sufism had its earliest organization, and lived by his own labour.

## Mysticism

Under the stimulus of Christian as well as Hellenistic ideas Moslem asceticism became mystical in the second Moslem century; that is, it began to be regarded by its devotees as an emotional means of purifying the human soul, so that it may know and love God and be united with Him, rather than as a means for winning His reward in a future world. This Sufi knowledge (jna rifaji} of God is a form of gnosis achieved by the inner light of the individual soul, in contrast to the knowledge Çilm) of Him by the intellect or through acquiescence in the accepted tradition. The doctrine of gnosis was developed by abu-Sulaymân al-Dârâni (f 849-50), whose tomb in Dârayya near Damascus was still an object of pilgrimage in the days of Yâqut.<sup>3</sup> But the first Sufi of the mystic, as opposed to the ascetic, school was Ma'rûf al-Karkhi, of the Baghdad school, who died in 815. Originally a Christian, or possibly a Sâbian,<sup>4</sup> Ma'rûf was described as a God-intoxicated man and venerated as a saint. His tomb at Baghdâd on the west bank of the Tigris is still a great resort for pilgrims and at the time of al-Qushayri<sup>5</sup> (f 1074)

<sup>1</sup> T. Duka in Journal Royal Asiatic Society (1904), pp. 132 seq.

\* jbn-'Asâkir, vol. ii, pp. 167-96; Kutubi, vol. i, pp. 3-5/ al-Qushayri, al-R'salah (Cairo, 1284), PP- 9'io. 3

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Ct. al-Hujwiri, Kashf al-Mahjûb, tr. R. A. Nicholson (Leyden, 1911) p 114 <sup>d</sup> Risâlah. p. 12.

prayer at it was considered a sure remedy for the sick. According to the mystic principle nothing really exists but God, God is eternal beauty, and the path leading to Him is love. Love thus becomes the essence of mysticism.

From speculative mysticism, Sufism advanced to theosophy. Theosophy In effecting this transition, which took place during the period of translation from Greek, Hellenistic influence was paramount. The exponent of Sufi theosophy was dhu-al-Nun<sup>1</sup> al-Misri (i.e. the Egyptian), of Nubian parents,<sup>2</sup> who died at al-Jizah (Gizeh) in 860. Sufis in general consider this ascetic the originator of their doctrine. They number him among their first qutbs (pivots of the universe) and follow the mention of his name by the invocation "May God sanctify his inmost soul [szrr]!" It was dhu-al-Nun who gave Sufism its permanent shape. He introduced the idea that the true knowledge of God is attained by one means only, ecstasy (wajd). Al-Mas'udi<sup>3</sup> tells us that dhu-al-Nun was wont to wander amid the ruined monuments of his native Egypt endeavouring to decipher their mysterious figures as a key to the lost sciences of antiquity.

The step from theosophy to pantheism was not difficult and Pantheism was made chiefly under Indo-Iranian influences. The AghaniA has preserved for us at least one portrayal of

an unmistakable Buddhistic view of life, and the zindtq monks described by al-Jahiz<sup>5</sup> were either Indian sadhus, Buddhist monks or their imitators.<sup>6</sup> A Persian, Bayazid<sup>7</sup> al-Bistami (f ca. 875), whose grandfather was a Magian, probably introduced the doctrine of fana, self-annihilation, possibly a reflection of Buddhist Nirvana. Another Persian, al-Hallaj (the carder), was in 922 flogged, exposed on a gibbet, then decapitated and burned by the 'Abbasid inquisition for having declared, "I am the Truth" (i.e. God). His "crucifixion" made him the great Sufi martyr.

His mystic theory is made clear in these verses:

<sup>1</sup> "The man of the fish", applied to Jonah in Koran 21 : 87. Dhu-al-Nün's real name was Thawbän abu-al-Fayd ibn-Ibrähim.

<sup>2</sup> Qushayri, p. 10; Hujwiri, p. 100.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. ii, pp. 401-2.

<sup>4</sup> Vol. iii, p. 24, 11. 27-8.  
iv, pp. 146-7.

<sup>6</sup> Hayawän, vol.

<sup>8</sup> Ignaz Goldziher, Vorlesungen über den Islam, ed. F. Babinger (Heidelberg, 1925), p. 160.

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<sup>7</sup> Tur. pronunciation of Ar. abu-Yazid. See Qushayri, pp. 17\*18; ibn-Khallikän, vol. i, p. 429.

I am He whom I love, and He whom I love is I. We are two souls dwelling in one body. When thou seest me, thou seest Him: And when thou seest Him, thou seest us both.<sup>1</sup>



Al-Hallaj's tomb in west Baghdad stands till now as that of a saint. But the greatest monist and pantheist Sufi was Muhyi-al-Din ibn-'Arabi (i 1165-1240) of Spain, whose tomb at the foot of Mt. Qasiyun in Damascus is today enclosed in a large mosque bearing his name. Unlike such orthodox Sufis as al-Ghazzali and al-Junayd of Baghdad (f 910),<sup>2</sup> ibn-'Arabi endeavoured to reduce Sufism to a science which he intended to have reserved for circles of initiates. The development of the pantheistic idea that all is God was due to him.

Mystic In the field of mystic poetry the Arabs produced only one great philosophy name, that of the Egyptian ibn-al-Farid, 1181-1235, whose masterpiece is a long ode (rhyming in t)<sup>3</sup> forming an exquisite hymn of divine love. On the other hand, almost all Persian poets of the first order, e.g. Sa'di, Hafiz and al-Rumi, were mystics. But in the field of philosophic Sufism the Arabic-writing world can claim two of the greatest intellects Islam ever produced, al-Farabi and al-Ghazzali. It was the latter who reconciled Sufism, with its many unorthodox practices, with Islam and grafted mysticism upon its intellectualism.

Fraternal For the first five Islamic centuries, that form of religious experience termed Sufism stood almost entirely on an individual basis. Small circles of disciples and followers did cluster round the personality or memory of some inspiring teacher, as in the case of al-Hallaj, but such organized bodies were local in provenience and not of permanent character. Before the close of the twelfth Christian century self-perpetuating corporations began to appear. The first fraternity (tarīqah) established on such a principle was the Qadirite, so named after the Persian \*Abd-al-Qadir al-Jilani or al-Jili (1077-1166),<sup>4</sup> who flourished in

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 261. Cf. R. A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism* (Cambridge, 1921), p. 80; Louis Massignon, *La Passion d'al-Hallaj: martyr mystique de VIslam* (Paris, 1922), vol. ii, p. 518.

<sup>2</sup> Qushayri, pp. 24-5; Hujwiri, pp. 128-30.

<sup>3</sup> *Diwan*, ed Amin Khuri, 3rd ed. (Beirut, 1894), pp. 65-132; tr. almost entirely by Nicholson, *Studies*, pp. 199-266.

<sup>4</sup> The best extant biography is in al-Dhahabi, "Ta'rikh al-Islam", D. S. Margoliouth in *Journal Royal Asiatic Society* (1907), pp. 267-310. On his miracles see ohattanawn, *Bahjat al-Asrdr* (Cairo, 1304), which has on its margin 78 sermons of al-Jilani entitled *Futuh al-Ghayb*.

Baghdad. The order, one of the most tolerant and charitable, now claims followers throughout the whole Moslem world, including Algeria, Java and Guinea. The second fraternity in order of antiquity was the Rifa'ite, founded by an 'Iraqi, Ahmad al-Rifa'i (j- 1183), whose members, like those of other fraternities, can perform strange feats, such as swallowing glowing embers, live serpents and glass, or passing needles and knives through their bodies. The Mawlawite order, commonly known as the whirling dervishes, centres upon the great Persian poet Jalal-al-Din al-Rumi, who died in Qunyah (Konieh, classical Iconium) in 1273. In opposition to the general Moslem practice al-Rumi gave an important place to music in the ceremonies of his order. The order has always had as its superior one of his descendants who lived in Qunyah. The superior enjoyed the privilege of girding the new sultan-caliph of Turkey with his sword.

Various other independent fraternities developed in various countries at different times, ranging in their Sufism from ascetic quietism to pantheistic antinomianism. In most instances the founder of the order became himself the centre of a cult, invested with divine or quasi-divine powers, and the headquarters of his order developed into a foyer of saint-worship. In Africa the strongest religious brotherhood is the Shadhilite,<sup>1</sup> founded by \*Ali al-Shadhili (f 1258), which is especially strong in Morocco and Tunisia and has sub-orders under special names. Islam in Morocco is characterized by saint-worship to a greater degree than perhaps in any other country. The modern Sanusi brotherhood, with headquarters in the oasis of Kufra and formerly in Jaghbub, was founded in 1837 by the Algerian Shaykh al-Sanusi and is clearly distinguishable from the preceding orders in being a congregation-state with political and military as well as religious aims. The leading native fraternity of Egypt is the Ahmadiyah, after Ahmad-al-Badawi (f 1276), whose centre is at Tanta. In Turkey one of the strongest orders is the Baktashi, noted for its connection with the Janissaries. This order, which became firmly established about 1300, encourages celibacy, reveres 'Ali and shows traces of Christian influence in its theology. It seems to represent a sect rather than a Sufi fraternity. Besides inheriting the old religions of Asia Minor the dervish orders of that country

<sup>1</sup> On this see abu-al-Mawahib al-Shadhili, *Qawanin Hikam al-Ishraq* (Damascus, 1309); tr. Edward J. Jurji, *Illumination in Islamic Mysticism* (Princeton, 1938).

43» THE Umayyad and 'Abbasid empires part II have preserved traces of shamanism, which the early Turks brought with them from Central Asia.

The Sufi orders represent the only ecclesiastical organization in Islam. The members, commonly called dervishes,<sup>1</sup> live in special quarters, termed takīyah, zāwiyah or rib at, which at the same time serve as social centres, a function which the mosque fails to perform. The fraternity may have, in addition to the masters and neophytes, a third class of affiliated lay members who are subject to the guidance of the superior of the order.

Besides introducing a form of monasticism and ritual<sup>2</sup> the Sufis made other contributions to Islam. They were evidently responsible for the diffusion of the rosary (subhah) among Moslems.<sup>3</sup> Today only the puritanical Wahhabis eschew the rosary, regarding it as an innovation (bid'ah'). Of Hindu origin, this instrument of devotion was probably borrowed by the Sufis from the Eastern Christian churches and not directly from India. During the Crusades the rosary found its way into the Roman Catholic West. The first mention of the rosary in Arabic literature was made by the poet laureate abu-Nuwâs (f ca. 810).<sup>4</sup> The celebrated mystic al-Junayd (f 910) of Baghdad used it as a means of attaining a state of ecstasy, and when once a critic remonstrated with him for the use of such an innovation despite his reputation for sanctity, al-Junayd replied: "I will not renounce a path that has led me to God".<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, Sufism founded and popularized the cult of sainthood. Veneration of saints finds no sanction in the Koran. It sprang up, following the Christian practice, in response to the mystic call and to meet the need of bridging the gap between man and God in Islamic theology. While there is no formal canonization in Islam, popular acclaim based upon the performance of miracles (karâmât') constitutes a saint (wali, friend of God). By the twelfth century the original feeling common to both Sunnites and

Shi'ites that the invocation of saints was an idolatrous form of worship had been dissipated by a philosophical reconciliation of sainthood with orthodox principles, effected mainly through Sufi influence. When it came to the

\* Ar. *darwish*, from Pers., commonly explained as poor, needy, a mendicant.

<sup>2</sup> For a criticism by an orthodox Moslem see ibn-al-Jawzi, *Naqd*, pp. 262 seq.

<sup>3</sup> Ignaz Goldziher in *Revue, de l'histoire des religions*, vol. xxi (1890), pp. 295-300:

*Vorlesungen*, p. 164.

<sup>1</sup> *Diwan*, p. 108. 1 (8. Cf. ibn-Qutaybah, *al-Shi'r*. p. 508, 1. 2

*Qushayri*, p. 25.

question of rank among "the friends of Allah", the chivalrous Sufis maintained the principle of complete equality between the sexes.<sup>1</sup> They, for instance, accorded Râbi'ah al-'Adawiyah (ca. 717-801) of al-Basrah, a mystic woman of noble life and lovely character, first place in the list of saints. Since then Râbi'ah has become "the saint par excellence of the Sunnite hagiology". When young she was sold as a slave, but on seeing a radiance round her while she prayed her master freed her. She refused to marry and lived a life of extreme asceticism and other-worldliness. She soon became a revered guide along "the mystic way", inculcating penitence, patience, gratitude, holy fear, voluntary poverty and utter dependence {*tawakkuV*} upon God. Asked whether she hated Satan, Râbi'ah replied: "My love for God leaves no room for hating Satan". When in a dream

the Prophet asked her whether she loved him, her reply was: "My love for God has so possessed me that no place remains for hating aught or loving any save Him".<sup>2</sup> On another occasion she declared: "I have not served God from fear of God . . or love of Paradise . . . but only for the love of Him and the desire for Him" ' .

An impassioned prayer by one of those lovers of God, al-Suhrawardi, who at the age of thirty-six (A.D. 1191) was executed as a heretic at Aleppo by order of the viceroy al-Malik al-Zâhir and his father, Salâh-al-Dîn, makes plain the indebtedness of Sufi theosophy to Neo-Platonism as well as to Christianity.<sup>4</sup>

Another religious movement that took its final form under the Shi'ah 'Abbâsids and developed offshoots that played decisive rôles in the history of Islam and the caliphate was the Shi'ah. The partisans of 'Ali fared no better under the 'Abbâsid regime than under the Umayyad, and that in spite of the fact that they had been an important factor in establishing the former at the expense of the latter. The smiles of al-Ma'mûn, who even went so far as to don their colour, green, and proclaim as heir apparent one of their imâms, 'Ali al-Rida,<sup>5</sup> proved of no permanent

<sup>1</sup> Abu Nu'aym (f 1038) devotes a section of his voluminous *Hilyat al-Awliya wa-Tabaqat al-Asfiya* , vol. ii (Cairo, 1933), pp. 39'79,<sup>to</sup> women Sufis and saints.

<sup>2</sup> Farîd-al-Dîn 'Attâr, *Tadhkirat al-Awliya* , ed. R. A. Nicholson, vol. i (Leyden, 1905), p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> Abu-Tâlib (al-Makki), *Qût al-Qulub* (Cairo, 1932), vol. iii, p. 83. For more on

Râbi'ah consult Margaret Smith, Rabi'a the Mystic and her Fellow-Saints in Islam (Cambridge, 1928).

<sup>4</sup> Louis Massignon, Recueil de textes inédits concernant l'histoire de la mystique en pays d'Islam (Paris, 1929), pp. III-12. See below, p. 586.

<sup>5</sup> Ya'qûbi, vol. ii, pp. 544-5.

avail. Soon came al-Mutawakkil, who in 850 resumed the early practice of persecuting the Shi'ah; he destroyed the tomb of 'Ali at al-Najaf and the more venerated one of al-Husayn at Karbala',<sup>19</sup> thereby earning the everlasting hatred of all Shi'ites. In 1029 the Caliph al-Qadir drove a Shi'ite leader out of his Baghdad mosque and installed in his place a Sunnite.<sup>20 21</sup> This general hostility led the Shi'ites to the adoption of the principle of dissimulation (taqiya<sup>\*</sup>); i.e. dispensation from the requirements of religion under compulsion or threat of injury. The legitimacy of dissimulation as an ethical principle had already been recognized by some Kharijites,<sup>22</sup> but the Shi'ites made it a fundamental tenet. They contributed to it the further point that when a believer finds himself in a position where his adversaries are in the ascendancy, not only may he profess outwardly the form of the prevailing religion but he must do so as a measure of protection for himself and his co-religionists.<sup>23</sup>

Although a suppressed minority and perpetrators of unsuccessful, though not always unheroic, rebellions against the established order, the non-conformist Shi'ites persisted openly and under cover of taqiya in according their allegiance to whom rightful allegiance (walayah) was due, namely, an imam descended from 'Ali. Unlike the Sunnite

caliph the Shi'ite imam had inherited from Muhammad not only his temporal sovereignty but the prerogative of interpreting the law. In that capacity he was an infallible teacher and to his infallibility (ʿismah) he added the divine gift of impeccability.<sup>24</sup> Contrary to the Sunnite and the Sufi doctrine the Shi'ites maintained that religious certainty could be gained only from the instruction of such an imam divinely protected against error and sin. 'Ali, their first imam, was succeeded by his son al-Hasan and then by his other son, al-Husayn,<sup>25</sup> whose line is the more celebrated one. The last nine of the twelve imams to whom the Twelvers (Ithna ' Ashariyah) the main body of the Shi'ah, swore allegiance, were descendants of al-Husayn. Of these nine, four are said to have met death successively by poison: Ja'far (765) in al-Madinah, Musa<sup>26</sup> (799) in Baghdad, 'Ali al-Rida<sup>27</sup> (818) in Tus and Muhammad al-Jawad (835) in Baghdad. Others fell fighting against the authority of the caliphs or at the hands of executioners. Since the youthful twelfth imam, Muhammad, "disappeared" (264/878) in the cave of the great mosque at Samarra without leaving offspring, he became "the hidden \mustatir\" or "the expected \muntazar\" imam".<sup>28</sup> As such he is considered immune from death and in a temporary state of occultation (ghaybali}. In due time he will appear as the Mahdi (divinely guided one) to restore true Islam, conquer the whole world and usher in a short millennium before the end of all things. Though hidden, this twelfth imam has always been "the master of the time" {qaim al-zaman}. In Persia the Twelver Shi'ah was established in 1502 by the Safawids, who claimed descent from the seventh imam, Musa al-Kazim. Since then the shah has been considered as simply the locum tenens of the hidden imam and the mujtahids (higher theologians) as his spokesmen and intermediaries with men.



Thus did the imam-mahdi dogma become an essential part of Shi'ite creed. Even today it forms the main line of demarcation between Shi'ite and Sunnite Islam. While the Sunnites do look forward to a future restorer of the faith, they neither emphasize his importance in their eschatology nor call him mahdi.<sup>29</sup>

The Shi'ah soil proved most fertile for the development of ism&'iites heterodoxies. According to a tradition Muhammad once said, "The Israelites have been divided into seventy-one or -two sects, and so have the Christians, but my community shall be divided into seventy-three".<sup>30</sup> Of these sects many were offshoots from the Shi'ah.

The Twelvers were not the only group among the imamite Shi'ah. Another group agreed with the Twelvers as to the succession down to the sixth imam, Ja'far al-Sadiq, but at this point diverged, making Ja\*far's eldest son, Isma'il (f 760), in preference to his brother Musa, the seventh and last imam. This sect restricted the number of visible imams to seven and were therefore called Seveners (Sab'iyali). JaTar had designated Isma'il as his successor, but having learned of Isma'il's intemperance

1. 'Ali,! 661

3 Al-Ilasan, f 669

3. Al-Husayn, f 680

I \_

4. 'Ali Zayn-al-'Abidin, -fra. 712

Zayd 5. Muhammad al-Bâqir, f 731

6. Ja'far al-Sâdiq, f 765

Isma'il, J 760      7. Musa al-Kazim, f 799

| '

8. 'Ali AL-RIDA, t 818

<

|

9. Muhammad al-Jawad, f 835

10. 'Ali al-Hadi, J 868

|

11. Al-Hasan al-'Askari, f 874

12. Muhammad al-Muntazar

(al-Mahdi), f 878

Tree showing the Relationship of the Twelve Imams

changed his decision in favour of his second son, Musa. The majority of the Shi'ah acquiesced in the change and continued the imamate in Musa al-Kazim, who thus became number seven in the series of the twelve visible imams. But others, claiming that the imam as an infallible being could not prejudice his case by such a thing as drinking wine, remained loyal to Isma'il, who predeceased his father by five years. To these Seveners, also called Isma'ilites, Isma'il became the hidden Mahdi.<sup>1</sup>

In the Isma'iliiyah system, as in the Pythagorean system of old, the number seven assumed sacred importance. The Seveners

<sup>1</sup> Nawbakhti, pp. 57-8; Baghdadi, ed. Hitti, p. 58; ibn-Khaldun, Muqaddamah<sub>t</sub> pp. 167-8.

“periodicated” all cosmic and historical happenings by this number. In their gnostic cosmogony, partly based on Neo-Platonism, the steps of emanation were seven: (1) God; (2) the universal mind ( $\text{'}z^Z$ ); (3) the universal soul (nafs); (4) primeval matter; (5) space; (6) time; (7) the world of earth and man. This world was favoured with seven legislating prophets (sing. natiq)\ Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus ('Zra), Muhammad and Muhammad al-Tamm, son of Isma'il. In between each two of these legislating prophets they inserted seven silent ones (sing. samit), of whom the first was the “foundation” (as as). The silent prophets included such men as Ishmael, Aaron, Peter and 'Ali. Parallel to them ran another lower hierarchy, arranged in sevens or twelves, of propaganda leaders (sing. hujjati) and simple missionaries (sing. dai)y .

The Isma'ilites organized one of the most subtle and effective Bajinites means of politico-religious propaganda that the world of Islam ever experienced. From their places of retreat they began to send out missionaries to traverse the Moslem world preaching the doctrine known as batin'<sup>2</sup>, (inner, esoteric). According to the unorganized schools of thought, called Batinites by the orthodox, the Koran should be interpreted allegorically and religious truth could be ascertained by the discovery of an inner meaning of which the outer form (zahir) was but a veil intended to keep that truth from the eyes of the uninitiate. Quietly and cautiously the novice was initiated under oath of secrecy in the esoteric doctrines, including such recondite ones as the formation of the universe by emanation from the divine essence, transmigration of souls, the immanence of the Divinity in Isma'il and the expectation of his early return (raf

ah) as the Mahdi. Initiation is said to have involved seven to nine graded stages <sup>3</sup> which recall modern Freemasonry.

This esoteric system found an able enthusiast in one 'Abdullah, whose father, Maymun al-Qaddah, of obscure origin, had practised as an oculist (qaddali} in al-Ahwaz before moving to Jerusalem. It was 'Abdullah who perfected the religio-political system of the Isma'ilites just delineated. From his headquarters,

<sup>1</sup> Shahrastani, pp. 145\*7; al-Ijli, al-Mawdu'at, vol. viii (Cairo, 1327), pp. 388-9. Consult W. Ivanow, A Guide to Ismaili Literature (London, 1933).

<sup>2</sup> Baghdadi, Uful, pp. 329-30; Shahrastani, pp. 147 seq. \ ibn-al-Jawzi, p. 108.

<sup>8</sup> Initiatory illumination transmitted to the adept by degrees was practised before this time by the Manichaeans and certain Greek schools of thought.

first at al-Basrah and later at Salamiyah<sup>1</sup> in northern Syria, he and his successors sent secret missionaries who systematically made their starting-point the arousing of scepticism in the would-be follower. They would then direct his attention to the great Mahdi soon to make his public appearance. Taking advantage of the growing enmity between Arab and Persian Moslems, this son of a humble Persian oculist conceived the audacious project of uniting in a secret society, with grades of initiation, both conquered and conquerors, who as free-thinkers would use religion as a scheme to destroy the caliphate and give 'Abdullah or his descendants the throne—a project as astounding in its conception as it was rapid in its execution and certain in its partial success. For it was this scheme that culminated in the rise of the Fātimid dynasty in Tunisia and Egypt.

## Qarma' pans

Before his death, about 874/ 'Abdullah had found a most zealous pupil and proselytizer in Hamdan Qarmat,<sup>3</sup> an 'Iraqi peasant who had read in the stars that the Iranians were going to regain the empire of the Arabs.<sup>4</sup> Hamdän became the founder of the Bätini sect known after him as the Qarmatian. In this movement the ancient feud between the native peasantry and the sons of the desert evidently found expression. About 890 the founder built himself, near al-Kūfah, an official residence, Dar al-Hijrah<sup>5</sup> (refuge for emigrants), which became the headquarters of the new movement. Active propaganda among the native masses, especially the so-called Nabataean peasants and artisans, as well as among the Arabs themselves, swelled the number of members in the new sect. Fundamentally the organization was a secret society based on a system of communism. Initiation was necessary for admission. The new community supported itself from a common fund created through contributions which were seemingly voluntary but in reality a series of taxes, each heavier than the preceding. Qarmat even went so far as to prescribe community of wives and property (ulfah')? In their theology these "Bolsheviks of Islam", as they are called by

<sup>1</sup> See Istakhri, p. 61, • ibn-al-Faqih, p. 110; Yäqūt, vol. iii, p. 123. The less authentic and modern form is Salamiyah; Maqdisi, p. 190; ibn-Khurdädhbih, pp. 76, 98.

<sup>2</sup> A century earlier according to a note in al-Juwayni, Ta rikh-i-Jahan-Gusha, ed. Mirza M. al-Qazwini, pt. 3 (Leyden, 1937), p. 315.

<sup>3</sup> Etymology of this word doubtful; probably not Arabic (Baghdadi, ed. Hitti, p. 171; Fihrist, p. 187, 1. 9;

Sam'āni, Ansāb, fol. 448b) but Aramaic for "secret teacher"; Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 2125, 2127; ibn-al-Jawzi, p. no.

<sup>4</sup> ZVZ/n7,p. 188.  
viii, p. 136.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. ibn-al-Athir, vol.

<sup>8</sup> For other sects with same views see ibn-Hazm, vol. iv, p. 143, 11. 13-14.

some modern writers, used an allegorical catechism based on the Koran and supposedly adapted to all creeds, all races and all castes. They stressed tolerance and equality, organized workers and artisans into guilds (sing, sinf} and in their ceremonial had the ritual of a guild. The earliest sketch of the organization of Moslem guilds occurs in the eighth epistle of the Ikhwan al-Safa', themselves probably Qarmatians. This trade guild movement, in the opinion of Massignon, reached the West and influenced the formation of European guilds and Freemasonry.<sup>1</sup>

The Qarmatian movement with its communistic, revolutionary tendencies developed into a most malignant growth in the body politic of Islam. To shed the blood of their opponents, even if Moslem, the Qarmatians considered legitimate. Before they were fully organized they had a hand in the servile war of the Zanj (negroes) at al-Basrah which between 868 and 883 shook the caliphate to its very foundation. Under the leadership of abu-Sa'id al-Hasan al-Jannabi,<sup>2</sup> originally a missionary of Qarmat,<sup>8</sup> they succeeded in founding (899) an independent state on the western shore of the Persian Gulf with al-Ahsa\*<sup>4</sup> for their capital. Soon this state became at once the bulwark of their power and the terror of the caliphate in Baghdad. From their new headquarters they conducted a series of terrible raids on the neighbouring lands. Al-Jannabi himself subjected al-

Yamamah about 903 and invaded 'Uman. His son and successor, abu-Tahir Sulayman, laid waste most of lower al-Traq and cut the pilgrim routes.<sup>5</sup> His atrocities culminated in 930 in the seizure of Makkah and the carrying off of the Black Stone.<sup>6</sup> After an absence of some twenty years this most sacred relic of Islam was returned (951) to al-Ka'bah by order of the Fatimid Caliph al-Mansur.<sup>7</sup> Between the tenth and eleventh centuries the followers of Qarmat and al-Jannabi from their headquarters at Salamyah kept Syria and al-Traq drenched in blood.<sup>8</sup> Even distant Khurasan

<sup>1</sup> Art. "Karmatians", Encyclopaedia of Islam.

<sup>2</sup> Jannab was a town in Faris near the mouth of a river emptying into the Persian Gulf; Iṣṭakhri, p. 34.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-Hawqal, p. 210.

\* Modern al-Hufuf. Ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii, p. 63.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. vol. viii, pp. 124-5, 132-3 > 232- .

<sup>8</sup> Miskawayh, *Tajarib al-Umam*, ed. H. F. Amedroz, vol. i (Oxford, 1920), p. 201; ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii, pp. 153-4.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Baghdadi, ed. Hitti, pp. 176-7; ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii, pp. 153-4.

<sup>8</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 2217 seq. \ Mas'udi, *Tanbih*. ٢١١ D. 371-6; Miskawayh, vol. ii, pp. 105-9.

and al-Yaman, because of the Qarmatian activity, formed lasting hotbeds of discontent.

The Assassins

The Qarmatian state fell but its Isma'ili doctrine passed on to the Fatimids of Egypt, from one of whom Druzism sprang, and later to the Neo-Isma'ilites or Assassins<sup>31</sup> of Alamut and Syria. The Assassin movement, called the “new propaganda”<sup>32</sup> by its members, was inaugurated by al-Hasan ibn-al-Sabbah (t 1124), probably a Persian from Tus, who claimed descent from the Himyarite kings of South Arabia. The motives were evidently personal ambition and desire for vengeance on the part of the heresiarch. As a young man in al-Rayy,<sup>33</sup> al-Hasan received instruction in the Batinite system, and after spending a year and a half in Egypt returned to his native land as a Fatimid missionary.<sup>34</sup> Here in 1090 he gained possession of the strong mountain fortress Alamut, north-west of Qazwin. Strategically situated on an extension of the Alburz chain, 10,200 feet above sea-level, and on the difficult but shortest road between the shores of the Caspian and the Persian highlands, this “eagle’s nest”, as the name probably means, gave ibn-al-Sabbah and his successors a central stronghold of primary importance. Its possession was the first historical fact in the life of the new order.

From Alamut the grand master (dai al-duah) with his disciples made surprise raids in various directions which netted other fortresses. In pursuit of their ends they made free and treacherous use of the dagger, reducing assassination to an art. Their secret organization, based on Isma'ilite antecedents, developed an agnosticism which aimed to emancipate the initiate from the trammels of doctrine, enlightened him as to the superfluity of prophets and encouraged him to believe nothing and dare all. Below the grand master stood the grand priors (sing, al-dai al-kablrij each in charge of a particular district. After these came the ordinary propagandists. The lowest degree of the order comprised the fidais\* who stood ready to



execute whatever orders the grand master issued. A graphic, though late and second-hand, description of the method by which the master of Alamut is said to have hypnotized his “self-sacrificing ones” with the use of hashish has come down to us from Marco Polo, who passed in that neighbourhood in 1271 or 1272. After describing in glowing terms the magnificent garden surrounding the elegant pavilions and palaces built by the grand master at Alamut, Polo proceeds:

Now no man was allowed to enter the Garden save those whom he intended to be his Ashishin. There was a fortress at the entrance to the Garden, strong enough to resist all the world, and there was no other way to get in. He kept at his Court a number of the youths of the country, from 12 to 20 years of age, such as had a taste for soldiering.... Then he would introduce them into his Garden, some four, or six, or ten at a time, having first made them drink a certain potion which cast them into a deep sleep, and then causing them to be lifted and carried in. So when they awoke they found themselves in the Garden.

When therefore they awoke, and found themselves in a place so charming, they deemed that it was Paradise in very truth. And the ladies and damsels dallied with them to their hearts' content. . . .

So when the Old Man would have any Prince slain, he would say to such a youth: “Go thou and slay So and So; and when thou returnest my Angels shall bear thee into Paradise. And shouldst thou die, na-the-less even so will I send my Angels to carry thee back into Paradise.”<sup>1</sup>

The assassination in 1092 of the illustrious vizir of the Saljuq sultanate, Nizam-al-Mulk, by a fidai disguised as a Sufi,<sup>2</sup> was the first of a series of mysterious murders which

plunged the Moslem world into terror. When in the same year the Saljuq Sultan Malikshah bestirred himself and sent a disciplinary force against the fortress, its garrison made a night sortie and repelled the besieging army. Other attempts by caliphs and sultans proved equally futile until finally the Mongolian Hulagu, who destroyed the caliphate, seized the fortress in 1256 together with its subsidiary castles in Persia.<sup>3</sup>

As early as the last years of the eleventh century the Assassins had succeeded in setting firm foot in Syria and winning as convert the Saljuq prince of Aleppo, Ridwan ibn-Tutush (f 1113). By

<sup>1</sup> The Book of Ser Marco Polo, the Venetian, tr. Henry Yule, 2nd ed. (London, 1875), vol. i> PP- 146-9. Cf. a strikingly similar description of a corresponding ceremony at Masyad ascribed to ibn-Khallikan in Fundgruben des Orients, vol. iii (Vienna, 1813), ed. and tr. Hammer, pp. 201-6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 256; see below, p. 478.

<sup>3</sup> Since the Assassin books and records were then destroyed, our information about this strange and spectacular order is derived mainly from hostile sources.

1140 they had captured the hill fortress of Masyâd<sup>1</sup> and many others in northern Syria, including al-Kahf, al-Qadmûs and al-'Ullayqah.<sup>2</sup> Even Shayzar (modern Sayjar) on the Orontes was temporarily occupied by the Assassins, whom (Jsâmah calls Ismâ'ilites. One of their most famous masters in Syria was Râshid-al-Dîn Sinân (f 1192), who resided at Masyâd and bore the title shaykh al-jabal, translated by the Crusades' chroniclers as "le vieux de la montagne"<sup>4</sup> (the old man of the mountain). It was Rashid's henchmen who struck

awe and terror into the hearts of the Crusaders. After the capture of Masyâd in 1260 by the Mongols, the Mamlük Sultan Baybars in 1272 dealt the Syrian Assassins the final blow. Since then the Assassins have been sparsely scattered through northern Syria, Persia, Umân, Zanzibar and especially India, where they number about a hundred and fifty thousand and go by the name of Khojas or Mawlas.<sup>5</sup> They all acknowledge as titular head the Agha Khan of Bombay, who claims descent through the last grand master of Alamüt. from Ismâ'il, the seventh imâm, receives over a tenth of the revenues of his followers, even in Syria, and spends most of his time as a sportsman between Paris and London.

N usa vr is

The Nusayris of northern Syria, who antedate the Druzes of Lebanon, form another of the surviving Ismâ'ilite sects. They are so named after Nluhammad ibn-Nusayr, of the end of the ninth century, a partisan of the eleventh 'Alid imâm al-Hasan al-'Askari (f 874).® According to Dussaud<sup>7</sup> the followers of ibn-Nusayr present a remarkable example of a group passing directly from paganism to Ismâ'ilism. This explains the points of marked difference between them and the main body of Ismâ'ilites.

The Nusayris, in company with other sects of extreme Shi'ites but unlike the Ismâ'ilites, consider 'Ali the incarnation

<sup>1</sup> Variants Maçyâf, Maçyâth. It still stands on the eastern side of the Nuçayrîyah Mountain. Ibn-al-Athir,' vol. xi, p. 5<sup>2</sup>> abu-al-Fidâ , vol. iii, p. 16.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Batfutih, vol. i, p. 166.

<sup>8</sup> Kitab al-1'tibâr, ed. Ilitti, pp. 159-60 = Arab-Syrian Gentleman, p. 190.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. William of Tyre, "Historia rerum" in Recueil des historiens des croisades: historiens occidentaux, vol. i (Paris, 1844)» p. 99<sup>^</sup>-

<sup>5</sup> Other than these the Dâwûdis of Gujarat in India, who number over a hundred thousand, are likewise Isma'ilites, but are not followers of the Âgha Khan. On the Dâwûdis see D. Menant in Revue du monde musulman, vol. x (1910), pp. 472 seq.

- The first important references to ibn-Nu?ayr and his followers occur in the manuscripts of Hamzah and other Druze polemicists of the early eleventh century.

<sup>7</sup> René Dussaud, Histoire et religion des Nofairis (Paris, 1900), p. 51. of the deity.<sup>1</sup> Hence the name 'Alawites given them since the French mandate was established in their territory. Unlike the Druzes and other Moslem sects they possess a liturgy and have adopted a number of Christian festivals, including Christmas and Easter. Some of them bear Christian names such as Matta (Matthew), Yuhanna (John) and Hilanah (Helen). In addition to these borrowings from Christian sources their religion, which they practise with even greater secrecy than the Druzes, has retained clear remnants of their former pagan beliefs. Today some three hundred thousand adepts of this system, mostly peasants, inhabit the mountainous region of northern and central Syria and are scattered as far as Turkish Cilicia.

The Nusayris, Assassins, Druzes, Qarmatians and similar Other Isma'ilite sects are considered even by the Shi'ites themselves, <sub>n</sub> that is by the Twelvers, who form the bulk of the Shi'ite group, doxies as extremists (ghulali), mainly

because they compromise the divinity of God and disregard the finality of Muhammad's prophethood.<sup>2</sup> Among the ghulah is a sect which has gone so far as to declare that Gabriel mistook Muhammad for 'Ali when he called him to his prophetic mission.<sup>3</sup> Of the ultra-Shi'ite sects which had a late development may be mentioned the Takhtajis (woodcutters) of western Anatolia, the 'Ali-Ilahis ('Ali-deifiers) of Persia and Turkestan, their close of kin the Qizil-bash (red-heads) of the east of Anatolia and the Baktashis of Turkey and Albania.

On the opposite wing stand the Zaydis of al-Yaman, the partisans of Zayd,<sup>4</sup> grandson of al-Husayn, whom they regard as the founder of their sect. Of all the Shi'ite sects this is the nearest akin to the Sunnites and in some respects the most tolerant. Between the ghulah on the one hand and the Zaydis on the other the Twelvers occupy the middle ground of Shi'ism. Contrary to other Shi'ite groups the Zaydis believe in no hidden imam, practise no temporary marriage (mut'ah) and allow no dissimulation (taqiya). But they share with all other Shi'ite groups hostility to Sufism. In all, the Shi'ites with their sub-sects do not form more than sixty million people or fourteen per cent, of the body of Islam.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Shahrastani, pp. 143-5.

\* For other extremists consult Baghdadi, ed. Hitti, pp. 145 Shahrastani,

pp. 132 seq.; ibn-Hazm, vol. iv, pp. 140 seq.; Ash'ari, Maqalat, vol. i, pp. 5" \*6.

' Baghdadi, p. 157.  
above, p. 442.

<sup>4</sup> Consult the genealogical tree

<sup>1</sup> Cf. above, p. 249, n. 2.

From Stanley Lane-Poole, "History of Egypt" {Methuen & Co. Ltd.)

DINAR OF AHMAD IBN-TULUN, MISR, a.d. 8Si

## CHAPTER XXXI

### THE CALIPHATE DISMEMBERED: PETTY DYNASTIES

#### IN THE WEST

##### I. In

##### Spain

##### 2. The Idrīsids

Five years after the foundation of the 'Abbâsid caliphate the youthful 'Abd-al-Rahmân, sole distinguished scion of the Umayyads to escape the general massacre which signaled the accession of the new régime, reached Cordova in far-off Spain. A year later, in 756, he established there a brilliant dynasty. The first province was thereby for ever stripped off the 'Abbâsid empire, still in its infancy. Others were soon to follow.

In 785 Idris ibn-'Abdullâh, a great-grandson of al-Hasan, participated in one of those recurring 'Alid revolts in al-Madinah. The insurrection was suppressed and he fled to Morocco (al-Maghrib),<sup>1</sup> where he succeeded in founding a kingdom bearing his name that lasted for almost two centuries (788-974). The Idrīsids,<sup>2</sup> whose principal capital

was Fas (Fez),<sup>3</sup> were the first Shi'ite dynasty in history. They drew their strength from the

<sup>1</sup> Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 488; ibn-Khaldün, vol. iv, pp. 12-14; ibn-Tdhâri, Bayân, vol. i, pp. 72 seq., 217 seq., tr. E. Fagnan, vol. i (Algier, 1901), pp. 96 seq., 303 seq.

<sup>2</sup> Consult Stanley Lane-Poole, *The Mohammadan Dynasties* (London, 1893, reproduced 1925), p. 35; E. de Zambaur, *Manuel de généalogie et de chronologie pour l'histoire de l'Islam* (Hanover, 1927), P- 65.

<sup>3</sup> The city was built by Idris. Ibn-abi-Zar' (al-Fâsi), *Rawd al-Qirtâs fi Akhbâr Mulûk al-Maghrib*, ed. J. H. Tornberg (Upsala, 1843), P- \*51<sup>tr</sup>- Tornberg, *Annales regum Mauritaniae* (Upsala, 1845), PP- 21 seq.

Berbers, who though Sunnite were ever ready to espouse a schismatic cause. Hemmed in between the Fatimids of Egypt and the Umayyads of Spain, their dynasty finally succumbed under the fatal blows of a general of the Caliph al-Hakam II (961-76) of Cordova.<sup>1</sup>

As the Shi'ite Idrisids were carving for themselves a domain in the western part of North Africa, the Sunnite Aghlabids were <sup>A&hlabids</sup> doing likewise to the east. Over the territory called Ifriqiyah (Africa Minor, i.e. mainly Tunisia), a corruption of Latin "Africa", Harun al-Rashid had appointed in 800 Ibrahim ibn-al-Aghlab as governor.<sup>2</sup> Ibn-al-Aghlab (800-811) ruled as an independent sovereign, and after the year of his appointment no 'Abbasid caliph exercised authority beyond the western frontier of Egypt. The Aghlabids contented themselves with the title amir, but seldom bothered to inscribe the caliph's name on their coinage even as a token of his spiritual suzerainty. From their capital, al-Qayrawan, heir to Carthage, they

dominated in their century of power (800-909) the mid-Mediterranean.

Many of Ibrahim's successors proved as energetic as he. The dynasty became one of the pivotal points of history in the long conflict between Asia and Europe. With their well-equipped fleet they harried the coasts of Italy, France, Corsica and Sardinia. One of them, Ziyadat-Allah I (817-38), sent against Byzantine Sicily in 827 an expedition which had been preceded by many piratical raids. This and succeeding expeditions resulted in the complete conquest of the island by 902.<sup>3</sup> Sicily, as we shall see, became an advantageous base for operations against the mainland, particularly Italy. Besides Sicily, Malta and Sardinia were seized, mainly by pirates whose raids extended as far as Rome. At the same time Moslem pirates from Crete were repeatedly raiding the isles of the Aegean Sea and by the middle of the tenth century were harassing the coasts of Greece. Three Kufic inscriptions lately discovered in Athens reveal the existence of an Arab settlement there which may have survived until the early tenth century.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-abi-Zar', pp. 56-7.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi, pp. 106 seq.;, ibn-Tdhari, vol. i, p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> See ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi, pp. 235 seq.-, ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, pp. 198-204.

\* D. G. Kampouroglous, "The Saracens in Athens", Social Science Abstracts, vol. ii (1930), no. 273; G. Soteriou, "Arabic Remains in Athens in Byzantine Times", ibid. no. 2360.



The great Mosque of al-Qayrawân, still standing as a rival to the famous mosques of the East, was begun under this Ziyâdat-Allâh and completed by Ibrâhîm II (874-902). The site was that on which the primitive edifice of 'Uqbah, founder of al-Qayrawân, had stood. 'Uqbah's mosque had been adorned by one of his successors with pillars of marble from the ruins of Carthage, which were again utilized in the Aghlabid structure. The square minaret of this mosque, also a relic of the earlier structure of Umayyad days and therefore the oldest surviving in Africa, introduced into north-western Africa the Syrian form which was never displaced by the slighter and more fantastic forms of Persian ancestry and Egyptian development. In the Syrian type stone was used as against brick in the other. Thanks to this mosque, al-Qayrawân became to the Western Moslems the fourth holy city, ranking after Makkah, al-Madinah and Jerusalem—one of the four gates of Paradise.

It was under the Aghlabids that the final transformation of Ifrîqiyah from an outwardly Latin-speaking, Christianity-professing land to an Arabic-speaking, Islam-professing region took place. Like a house of cards Latin North Africa, which supplied St. Augustine with his cultural environment, collapsed never to rise again. The transformation was perhaps more complete than in any other region thus far reduced by Moslem arms. Such opposition as was raised later came from unsubdued Berber tribes and took the form of schismatic and heretical Moslem sectarianism.

The last Aghlabid was Ziyâdat-Allâh III (903-9),<sup>35</sup> who in 909 took to flight before the Fâtimid advance without offering any resistance.<sup>36</sup> The story of the Fâtimids, who in 909 succeeded the Aghlabids in North Africa and in 969 displaced the Ikhshidids in Egypt and southern Syria, belongs to a later chapter. The Ikhshidids, whose history we shall soon sketch, were preceded by the Tûlûnid dynasty.

The

Tûlûnids

The founder of the short-lived Tûlûnid dynasty (dawlah, 868-905) in Egypt and Syria was Ahmad ibn-Tûlûn, whose father, a Turk from Farghânah, was sent in 817 by the Sâ mânid ruler of Bukhâra as a present to al-Ma'mûn.<sup>37</sup> In 868 Ahmad went to Egypt as lieutenant to its governor. Here he soon made himself independent.<sup>38</sup> When hard pressed for money by the Zanj rebellion, the Caliph al-Mu'tamid (870-92) demanded but did not receive financial aid from his Egyptian lieutenant. This event was a turning-point in the life of Egypt. It marked the emergence in the Nile valley of an independent state which maintained its sovereignty throughout the Middle Ages. Heretofore Egypt's rich revenues went partly into Baghdad and partly into the pockets of successive governors, who were primarily tax-farmers. Now money remained in the country and was spent in glorifying the reigning house. Down to the time of ibn-Tûlûn as many as a hundred different Moslem governors, with an average of about two years and a quarter of incumbency,<sup>39</sup> had succeeded one another in the exploitation of the land. Egypt profited by the Tûlûnid régime and entered upon an era of comparative prosperity.

Ibn-Tûlûn (868-84) gave his new state a rigid military organization. For the maintenance of authority he depended upon an army of a hundred thousand whose core consisted of a bodyguard of Turkish and negro slaves. From his troops, as well as from his slaves and subjects, he exacted an oath of personal allegiance.<sup>40</sup> When in 877 the governor of Syria died Ahmad occupied the neighbouring country without much opposition.<sup>41</sup> For the first time since Ptolemaic days Egypt had become a sovereign state, and for

the first time since Pharaonic days it ruled Syria. To maintain his hold on Syria Ahmad developed a naval base at 'Akka (Acre).<sup>42</sup> For many centuries to come Syria continued to be ruled from the valley of the Nile.

The Tūlūnid régime interested itself in irrigation, the most Public vital factor in the economic life of the land. Ahmad improved <sup>works</sup> the Nilometer on the isle of al-Rawdah, near Cairo. This measuring instrument was first built by an Umayyad governor in 716 superseding the more ancient one of Memphis.<sup>43</sup> The régime was the first since the Arab conquest to make Moslem Egypt famed as a centre of art and as a seat of a splendid court. Al-Qata'i'<sup>7</sup> (the wards), the new quarter of al-Fustat, the capital, was adorned with magnificent buildings. One of them was the sixty-thousand-dinar hospital {blmaristan} built by Ahmad.<sup>44</sup> The mosque that still bears the name of Ahmad ibn-Tulun is one of the principal religious monuments of Islam. It shows, especially in its minaret—the oldest in Egypt—the architectural influence of the school of Samarra, where Ahmad had spent his youth. The structure cost 120,000 dinars<sup>45</sup> and is remarkable for the use of brick piers and for the early use of the pointed arch (above, p. 417). About one-seventeenth of the Koran is inscribed in beautiful Kufic characters on the wooden frieze round the inside of the building just below the flat timbered roof.<sup>46</sup>

The palace of Khumarawayh (884-95), Ahmad's extravagant son<sup>47</sup> and successor, with its "golden hall", whose walls were covered with gold and decorated with bas-reliefs of himself, his wives and his songstresses,<sup>48</sup> was one of the most remarkable Islamic structures. The figures of Khumarawayh and his wives, wearing gold crowns, were life-size and carved in wood. Such representation of living persons is exceedingly rare in Islamic art. The palace stood

amidst a garden rich in sweet-smelling flowers planted in beds which were shaped to spell Arabic words, and in exotic trees growing round gilded water tanks.<sup>49</sup> Other outstanding features were an aviary<sup>50</sup> and a zoological garden,<sup>8</sup> but the chief wonder of the palace was a pool of quicksilver in its courtyard. Leather cushions inflated with air were moored on the surface of this pool by silken cords fastened to silver columns; on these the dynast used to lie, rocking agreeably to alleviate insomnia and induce slumber. Traces of the quicksilver were found in later years on the site.<sup>9</sup> Shortly before his violent death Khumarawayh gave his daughter Qatr-al-Nada (dewdrop) in marriage to the Caliph al-Mu'tadid, settled on her a dowry of a million dirhams and presented her with one thousand mortars of gold and other objects "the like of which had never been given before".<sup>1</sup> On account of his extravagance and luxuries Khumarawayh was held impious by the orthodox. He could, it is claimed, drink four rotis of Egyptian wine at one sitting.<sup>2</sup> It is related that as his body was being lowered into its grave the seven Koran readers appointed to recite the sacred book on the adjacent tomb of his father happened to be chanting: "Seize ye him and drag him into the mid-fire of hell".<sup>51</sup>

The Tulunid dynasty was the earliest manifestation of a political crystallization in the unruly and heretofore inarticulate Turkish element in the heart of the caliphate. Other and more important Turkish dynasties were soon to follow. The case of Ahmad ibn-Tulun was typical of the founders of the many states on the ruins of the caliphate. These states broke off entirely from the central government or remained only nominally dependent upon the caliph in Baghdad. Ahmad served as an example of what could be done in the matter of achieving military and political power at the expense of a bulky and unwieldy caliphate through the strong-handed and confident ambition of a

subject soldier and his slave satellites. But the Tulunid, as well as the Ikhshidid and most of the other dynasties, had no national basis in the lands over which they ruled and therefore were short-lived. Their weakness consisted in the absence of a strong coherent body of supporters of their own race. The rulers were themselves intruders who were obliged to recruit their bodyguards, which were their armies, from various alien sources. Such a rule can only be maintained by men of outstanding personal influence, and no sooner does the mighty arm of the founder relax or pass away than disintegration sets in. No wonder that we find the state founded by ibn-Tulun reverting to the 'Abbasids under his son and fourth successor, Shayban (904-5).<sup>52</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 310. Cf. ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, pp. 307-8; Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 2145-6; ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. ii, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> Tanukhi, Jami' al-Tawarikh, ed. D. S. Margoliouth, vol. i (London, 1921),

p. 261.

<sup>51</sup> Sur. 44 : 47.

<sup>4</sup> Kindi, pp. 247-8. Subjoined is a Tulunid tree:

1. Ahmad ibn-Tulun (S68-84)

2. Khumarawayh (854-95)

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5» The

Ikhshidids

A negro eunuch

After a brief interval of precarious 'Abbasid sway in Egypt and Syria, another Turkish dynasty of Farghanah origin,<sup>53</sup> the Ikhshidid (935-69), was established at al-Fustat. The founder, Muhammad ibn-Tughj (935-46), after arranging the disorganized affairs of Egypt,<sup>54 55</sup> received in 939 from the Caliph al-Radi the old Iranian princely title ikhshid. In the next two years al-Ikhshid, following the Tulunid precedent, added Syria-Palestine to his quasi-independent state. In the following year both Makkah and al-Madinah were incorporated. Henceforth the fate of al-Hijaz, a debatable land between east and west, was for several centuries linked with that of Egypt.

The two sons who succeeded Muhammad al-Ikhshid ruled only in name, the reins of the government being held by the able Abyssinian eunuch abu-al-Misk Kafur (musky camphor). Originally purchased by al-Ikhshid from an oil merchant for the equivalent of about eight pounds, Kafur became the sole ruler from 966 to 968. He successfully defended Egypt and Syria against the rising power of another petty dynasty in the north, the Hamdanid. His name has been immortalized in the verses first sung in praise of him, later in ridicule, by the greatest poet of his age, al-Mutanabbi',<sup>56</sup> the panegyrist of Kaffir's adversary, Sayf-al-Dawlah al-Hamdani. The case of this black slave rising from the humblest origin to wield absolute power was the first but not the last in Islamic history. Like other dynasts the Ikhshidids, and especially their founder, made lavish use of state moneys to curry favour with their subjects. The daily provision for Muhammad's kitchen included, we are told, a hundred sheep, a hundred lambs, two hundred and fifty geese, five hundred fowls, a thousand pigeons and a hundred jars of sweets. When it was poetically explained to Kafur that the recurrent earthquakes of that time were due to Egypt's dancing with joy at his excellences the proud Abyssinian

rewarded the would-be seismographer with a thousand dinars. Otherwise the Ikhshidids made no contribution to the artistic and literary life of their domain and no public works have been left by them. The last representative of this dynasty was an eleven-year-old boy, abu-al-Fawâris Ahmad, who in 969 lost the country to the illustrious Fâtimid general, Jawhar.<sup>57 58</sup>

The Ikhshîdids of Egypt had strong rivals in the Shi'ite 6. The Hamdânids to the north. Originally established in northern Mesopotamia with al-Mawsil for their capital (929-91), the Hamdânids, who were descendants of Hamdan ibn-Hamdûn<sup>59</sup> of the Taghlib tribe, advanced in 944 into northern Syria and under the leadership of the future Sayf-al-Dawlah (the sword of the dynasty) wrested Aleppo (Halab) and Hirs from the Ikhshidid lieutenant in charge. Syria, which never forgot its past glory under the Umayyads, had ever been a hotbed of dissatisfaction and rebellion against the 'Abbâsid regime. Sayf-al-Dawlah (944-67) of Aleppo became the founder of a north Syrian dynasty which lasted until 1003. His second successor, Sa'id-al-Dawlah (991-1001), however, was a vassal of the Fâtimids of Egypt. Hard pressed between the Byzantines and the Fâtimids, the Hamdânids<sup>60</sup> in that year gave way in favour of the latter.

Sayf-al-Dawlah owes his fame in Arab annals primarily to his munificent patronage of learning and, in a smaller measure, <sup>sc</sup> ^' ce

<sup>1</sup> Tughj

i

1. Muhammad al-Ikhshid (935-46)

4a. Abu-al-Hasan 'Ali (1001-3)

#### 4b. Abu-al-Ma'äli Sharif (1001-3)

to his taking up the cudgels against the Christian enemies of Islam after those cudgels had been laid down by other Moslem hands. The literary circle of this Hamdanid, himself a poet,<sup>1</sup> recalls the days of al-Rashid and al-Ma'mun. It included the celebrated philosopher-musician al-Farabi, whose modest daily needs were met by a pension of four dirhams from the state treasury; the distinguished historian of literature and music, al-Isbahani, who presented to his patron the autograph manuscript of his monumental Aghani and received in reward a thousand pieces of gold; the eloquent court preacher ibn-Nubatah (f 984), whose elegant sermons<sup>2</sup> in rhymed prose fired the zeal of his hearers for prosecuting the holy war against Byzantium; and above all the poet laureate al-Mutanabbi' (915-65), whose bombastic and ornate style with its flowery rhetoric and improbable metaphors renders him to the present day the most popular and most widely quoted poet in the Moslem world.<sup>3</sup> An early authority calls his poetry "the height of perfection".<sup>4</sup> Al-Mutanabbi'<sup>5</sup> (prophecy claimant), son of a water-carrier in al-Kufah, was so named because in his youth he claimed the gift of prophecy among the Bedouins of Syria. His poetical rival in Aleppo was a cousin of Sayf-al-Dawlah, abu-Firas al-Hamdani.<sup>6</sup> Estranged for a time from his Hamdanid patron, al-Mutanabbi' sought and received the protection of the Ikhshidid Kafur, in whom he was later disappointed.

As a late product of this ephemeral renaissance in northern Syria we may count the "philosopher of poets and poet of philosophers" abu-al-'Ala' al-Ma'arri (973-1057), who expressed the sceptical and pessimistic sentiments of an age of social decay and political anarchy in Islam. A descendant of the Tanukh, abu-al-'Ala' was born and died in Ma'arrat al-Nu'man, whence his surname. His tomb was



renovated in 1944 on the occasion of his thousandth anniversary. When four years old he was stricken with

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, pp. 66-8; Tanukhi, p. 134.

<sup>2</sup> Khutab, which have appeared in several Cairo and Beirut editions.

<sup>3</sup> His Diwan was edited by Dieterici and later by Nasif al-Yaziji (Beirut, 1882). The thousandth anniversary of his death (a.H. 354) was commemorated in 1935 in Syria, Lebanon and other lands.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 63. For an early critical view see Tha'alibi, Yatimah,

vol. i, pp. 78-164.

<sup>6</sup> Properly abu-al-Tayyib Ahmad ibn-Husayn.

<sup>8</sup> Diwan, ed. Nakhlah Qalfaf (Beirut, 1900); tr. in part, Rudolph Dvoiak as Abu Firas: ein arabischer Dichter und Held (Leyden, 1895). See also Tha'alibi, vol. i pp. 22-62.

' small pox, which cost him his sight, but for which compensation was made by the development of a prodigious memory. In 1009 abu-al-'Ala' went to Baghdad, where he spent about a year and seven months and became inoculated with the ideas of Ikhwan al-Safa' as well as with others of Indian origin. On his return home he adopted a vegetarian diet and a life of comparative seclusion. His late works, particularly his LuzumiyaD and Risalat al-Ghufran<sup>1</sup> (treatise on forgiveness) reveal him as one who took reason for his guide and pessimistic scepticism for his philosophy. It was this Risalah that is claimed to have exercised a determining influence over Dante in his Divine Comedy?<sup>1</sup>

His quatrains<sup>4</sup> have been partly done into English. Parallels have repeatedly been drawn between this Syrian poet and the Persian 'Umar al-Khayyam, who died about sixty years after him and shows decided marks of having been influenced by his predecessor. Al-Mutannabi' and al-Ma'arri close the period of great Arab poetry. Since that day hardly any Arab poet has been able to achieve more than local eminence.

After making his position secure in northern Syria, "the sword Raids into of the Hamdanid dynasty", beginning in 947, conducted annual <sup>of</sup>the<sup>and</sup> campaigns into Asia Minor. Until his death twenty years later Romans" not a year passed without some engagement with the Greeks.<sup>5</sup> At first fortune smiled on Sayf's efforts. He seized Mar'ash among other border towns. But the brilliant leadership of Nicephorus Phocas and John Tzimiscas,<sup>6</sup> both future emperors, saved the day for Byzantium. In 961 Nicephorus captured the capital, Aleppo, with the exception of the citadel, put over ten thousand of its youth and all the captives to the sword and destroyed the palace of Sayf-al-Dawlah. But after eight or nine days he retired.<sup>7</sup> After he became emperor (963-9) his troops wrested Cyprus from the Arabs and occupied Cilicia.<sup>8</sup> Thus was the road

<sup>1</sup> Al-Luzumiyat aw Luzurn Ma la Yalzam, ed. 'Aziz Zand, 2 vols. (Cairo, 1891, 1895); tr. (in part) Ameen Rihani (New York, 1918).

<sup>2</sup> Ed. Kamil Kilani, 2 pts. (Cairo, 1923); partially translated by R. A. Nicholson in Journal Royal Asiatic Society (1900), pp. 637-720; (1902), pp. 75-101, 337-62, 813-47.

<sup>3</sup> Asin, Islam and the Divine Comedy, tr. Sunderland.

<sup>4</sup> Rubaiyat, stanzas of four lines in which first, second and fourth rhyme; originally a Persian form of composition.

<sup>5</sup> See Yahya ibn-Sa'id al-Antaki, "Ta'rikh", ed. and tr. (Fr.) I. Kratchkovsky and A. Vasiliev in *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. xviii, pp. 768 seq.

<sup>6</sup> "Ibn-Shamshaqiq" of Arab chronicles; ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii, p. 407; abu-al-Fida', vol. ii, p. 110, 1. 20.

<sup>7</sup> Miskawayh, vol. ii, pp IQ2-4: Yahya, pp. 786-7      <sup>8</sup>  
Yaqut, vol. iii, p. 527.

open again to Syria. In the last year of his reign his army seized Antioch, long coveted as a city of patriarchs, saints and councils and as a religious peer of Byzantium itself. The city remained in Byzantine hands from 969 till 1084. Soon after the occupation of Antioch, Nicephorus' general entered Aleppo and exacted from Sayf's son and successor, Sa\*d-al-Dawlah (967-91), a humiliating treaty.<sup>1</sup> The Emperor John Tzimisce (969-76) adopted the policy of consolidating and insuring the conquests in Cilicia and northern Syria, and set for his final goal the freeing of Jerusalem. To this end he started from Antioch on a real crusade, entered Damascus, but did not penetrate far into Palestine. Early in his reign the refractory banu-Habib of Nasibln, cousins of the Hamdänids, 12,000 strong, left their homes on account of the high taxes, embraced Christianity and joined the Byzantines in their attacks on Moslem lands.<sup>2</sup> Tzimisce's successor, Basil II (976-1025), though troubled by the Arabs of North Africa, who at this time were in possession of Sicily and many Aegean islands, took the field in person to defend the Syrian possessions now threatened by the Fätimids of Egypt. But at the outset of the eleventh century he signed a treaty of peace with the Fätimid al-Häkim and no further serious

collision took place. The efforts of Basil II, preceded by those of Nicephorus and Tzimisces, extended the eastern boundary of the Byzantine empire at the expense of Islam as far as the Euphrates and into the heart of northern Syria.<sup>3</sup> Their reigns covered “the most brilliant period in the history of Byzantine relations with the eastern Muslims”.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Yahya, pp. 823-4.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Hawqal, pp. 140-41.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii, pp. 440-41.

<sup>4</sup> Vasiliev, Byzantine Empire, vol. i, p. 381

## CHAPTER XXXII

WHILE petty dynasties, mostly of Arab origin, were parcelling out the domains of the caliph in the west, the same process was being carried forward by others, chiefly Turkish or Persian, in the east.

The first to establish a quasi-independent state east of Baghdad was the once trusted general of al-Ma'mun, Tahir ibn-aj - Tahids Husayn of Khurasan, who had victoriously led his master's army against al-Amin. In this war the one-eyed Tahir is said to have used the sword so effectively with both hands that al-Ma'mun [61](#) nicknamed him dhu-al-Yaminayn (ambidextrous) and a poet described him as the warrior “minus one eye, plus an extra right arm”.[62](#) The descendant of a Persian slave, Tahir was rewarded in 820 by al-Ma'mun with the governorship of all lands east of Baghdad, with the centre of his power in Khurasan. Before his death two years later in his capital, Marw, Tahir had omitted mention of the caliph's name in the Friday prayer.[63](#) [64](#) Though nominally vassals of the caliph, Tahir's successors extended their dominion as far as the Indian frontier. They moved the seat of government to

Naysabur, where they remained in power till 872/ when they were superseded by the Saffarids.

The Saffarid dynasty, which originated in Sijistan and reigned 2. The in Persia for forty-one years (867-908), owes its foundation to \$affands one Ya'qub ibn-al-Layth al-Saffar (867-78). Al-Saffar (coppersmith) was a coppersmith by profession and a brigand by avocation. His chivalrous and efficient conduct as head of a band of outlaws attracted the favourable attention of the caliph's governor over Sijistan, who thereupon entrusted him with the

command of his troops.<sup>1</sup> Al-Saffar eventually succeeded his benefactor and added to his domains almost all Persia and the outskirts of India, even threatening Baghdad itself under the Caliph al-Mu'tamid.<sup>2</sup> The Samanids fell heir to a large portion of the Saffarid state.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. The Sâmânids

The Samanids of Transoxiana and Persia (874-999) were descended from Saman, a Zoroastrian noble of Balkh. The founder of the dynasty was Nasr ibn-Ahmad (874-92), a great-grandson of Saman, but the one who established its power was Nasr's brother Isma'il (892-907), who in 900 wrested Khurasan from the Saffarids.<sup>4</sup> Starting as Moslem sub-governors under the Tahirids, the Samanids under Nasr II ibn-Ahmad <sup>5</sup> (913—43), fourth in the line, extended their kingdom to its greatest limits, including under their sceptre Sijistan, Karman, Jurjan, al-Rayy and Tabaristan, in addition to Transoxiana and Khurasan. Though outwardly professing loyalty to the 'Abbasids, the dynasty was virtually independent. In the eyes of the Baghdad caliph its members were amirs (governors) or even 'amils (tax collectors), but within their own territory their authority was undisputed.

It was under the Samanids that the final subjugation of Transoxiana to Moslem rule was effected. Their capital, Bukhara, and their leading city, Samarqand, almost eclipsed Baghdad as centres of learning and art. Not only Arabic but Persian scholarship was protected and fostered. It was to a Samanid prince, abu-Salih Mansur ibn-Ishaq of Sijistan, a nephew of the second ruler, that the illustrious al-Razi dedicated his book on medicine entitled al-Mansuri in honour of his patron. It was in response to a summons from the Samanid ruler Nuh II (976-97) <sup>6</sup> that young ibn-Sina, then living in Bukhara and still in his teens, was accorded free access to the rich royal library,<sup>7</sup> where he acquired that seemingly inexhaustible fund of knowledge. From this

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. vii/pp. 124-5; ibn-Khallikan, vol. iii, pp. 350-51; Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 605; Mustawfi-i-Qazwini, Tarikh-i-Guzida, ed. E. G. Browne, vol. i (Leyden, 1910), p. 373; tr. (abr.) Browne, vol. ii (Leyden, 1913), p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> Istakhri, pp. 245-7. •

<sup>3</sup> Mas'udi, vol. viii, pp. 41-5; Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 1698-1706, 1880-87.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. vii, pp. 192-5, 346-7, vol. viii, pp. 4-6; Iṣfahani, ed. Gottwaldt, pp. 236-7; Tabari, vol. iii, p. 2194; Tarikh-i-Sistan, ed. Bahar (Teheran, \*935), P- 256.

<sup>6</sup> Consult Mustawfi-i-Qazwini, vol. i, pp. 381-3 = vol. ii, p. 74; ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii, pp. 58-60, 154-6.

<sup>6</sup> Consult ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, pp. 69 seq. ' Ibn-abi-U?aybi'ah. vol. ii, p. 4. epoch modern Persian literature takes its rise. Suffice it to recall that Firdawsi (ca. 934-1020) wrote his first poetry in this period and that Bal'ami, the vizir of Mansur <sup>1</sup> (961-76), translated an abridgment of al-Tabari's history <sup>2</sup>

and thus produced one of the oldest extant prose works in Persian. Ever since the Moslem conquest Persians had used Arabic as the medium of literary expression, but with these writers the brilliant Moslem literature of Persia began its development.

Though one of the most enlightened of the Iranian dynasties, the Sâ mânid was not free from those elements which proved fatal to others of the same period. To the usual problems presented by a turbulent military aristocracy and a precarious dynastic succession was now added a new danger, that of the Turkish nomads to the north. Even within the state power was gradually slipping into the hands of Turkish slaves with whom the Sâ mânids had filled their court. The Sâ mânid territory south of the Oxus was absorbed in 994 by the Ghaznawids, who rose to power under one of these slaves. The territory north of the river was seized by the so-called îlek (îlâq) Khâns of Turkestan, who in 992 captured Bukhâra and seven years later gave the coup de grâce to the expiring Sâ mânid dynasty. Thus for the first but not the last time we note Turanian hordes of Central Asia thrusting themselves to the forefront of Islamic affairs. The struggle between Iranians and Turanians for the mastery of the borderland of Islam in the fourth Moslem century was but a prelude to graver developments. We shall hereafter see these Turks play an increasingly important rôle in world affairs until they finally absorb most of the powers of the caliph of Baghdâd, in fact until they establish their own caliphate, the Ottoman, in "Baghdâd on the Bosphorus".

Among the Turkish slaves whom the Sâ mânids delighted to  
4. Ghazna-honour with high governmental posts was one Alptigîn, who <sup>W1 s</sup> started his career as a member of the bodyguard. Soon he rose to the headship of the guard <sup>3</sup> and thence was promoted in 961 to the governorship of Khurâsân. Shortly afterwards, however, he fell out of favour

with the new Sâ mânid ruler and betook himself to the eastern border of the kingdom. Here in 962 he captured

<sup>1</sup> A flattering description of the internal conditions under him has been left by an eye-witness, ibn-Hawqal, pp. 341-2, 344'5

<sup>2</sup> Mustawfi-i-Qazwini, vol. i, p. 385= vol. ii, p. 75\* .

» Ibn-Hawqal, pp. 13, 14, refers to liim as Albtakîn, hâjib fâhib Khurâsân.

Ghaznah, in Afghanistan, from its native rulers and established an independent realm [65](#) which developed into the Ghaznawid empire of Afghanistan and Panjab (962-1186). The real founder of the Ghaznawid dynasty, however, was Subuktigin (976-97), a slave and son-in-law of Alptigin. The sixteen Ghaznawids who succeeded him were his lineal descendants. Subuktigin widened his territory to include Peshawar in India and also Khurasan in Persia, which he first held under the Samanids.

### Mahmud of Ghaznah

The most distinguished member of the dynasty was Subuktigin's son Mahmud (999-1030). The location of his capital, Ghaznah, on the crest of a high plateau overlooking the plains of northern India, into which it possessed easy access through the valley of Kabul, gave him an advantageous position for a series of campaigns eastward. Between 1001 and 1024 Mahmud conducted no less than seventeen campaigns into India, which resulted in the annexation of the Panjab, with its centre, Lahore, of Multan and of part of Sind. [66](#) In the Panjab Moslem influence was now permanently established. From these raids Mahmud returned with fabulously rich spoils from the Hindu temples



and won an enviable distinction among his contemporaries as the idol-breaker and champion of orthodox iconoclastic Islam. He was one of the first in Moslem history to receive, and that about 1001, the title al-ghazi, bestowed on him who distinguished himself in war against unbelievers.

Mahmud likewise extended the western borders of his domains. Here he wrested the Persian 'Iraq, including al-Rayy and Isbahan, from the Shi'ite Buwayhids, who at the time had the caliph under their control. As a Sunnite, Mahmud had from the time of his accession acknowledged the nominal suzerainty of the Caliph al-Qadir (991-1031),<sup>67</sup> from whom he later received the title Yamln-al-Dawlah (the right arm of the state).<sup>68</sup> On their coins he and his immediate successors satisfied themselves with the title amir (governor) or sayyid (chief). Though Mahmud is credited with being the first in Islam to be designated sultan? evidence from coins shows that this high designation was first officially borne by the Saljüq rulers.<sup>1</sup> At their greatest extent Mahmud's dominions, besides northern India in the east and the Persian 'Iraq in the west, included all Khurasan, Tukháristán with its centre Balkh, part of Transoxiana in the north and Sijistán in the south.<sup>2</sup> He adorned his capital with magnificent buildings,<sup>3</sup> founded and endowed a large academy and made his munificent court the chief resort of poets and men of learning. His assemblage of literary genius included the Arab historian al-'Utbi <sup>4</sup> (j- 1036), the celebrated scientific and historical author al-Birüni and the illustrious Persian poet Firdawsi, the millennial anniversary of whose birth was celebrated in 1934-5 <sup>in</sup> Asia Europe and America. On dedicating his great epic, the Sháh-ncimah, to Mahmud and receiving only 60,000 dirhams instead of dinars for its 60,000 verses, Firdawsi denounced his patron in a scathing satire and had to flee for his life.

The rise of the Ghaznawid dynasty represents the first victory of the Turkish element in its struggle against the Iranian element for ultimate mastery in Islam. Yet the Ghaznawid state did not differ radically from the Sámánid or the Saflarid state. It was loosely held by force of arms, and as soon as the powerful hand wielding the sword relaxed the component parts were certain to fall away. This is what happened after Mahmud's death. The provinces of the east gradually separated themselves from the capital in the highlands, thus beginning the series of independent Moslem dynasties of India. In the north and west the Khans of Turkestan and the Great Saljüqs of Persia parcelled out the Ghaznawid domain. In the centre the hardy Ghürids of Afghanistan dealt the final blows and in 1186 destroyed the last Ghaz-nawids in Lahore.

While the wings of the 'Abbasid eagle were being clipped at The both extremities, a dagger clutched in Perso-Turkish hands was pointed at its heart. Under the domination of the Shi'ite Persian Buwayhids, and after them of the Sunnite Turkish Saljüqs, the caliph had little left except the capital and even there his authority was shadowy. The rise of an unruly imperial guard, followed by a revolt of negro slaves, undermined the central

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 474.

\* Hilál al-\$abi', pp. 340, 386.

<sup>3</sup> See S. Flury in Syria, vol. vi (1925), pp. ^1-90.

<sup>4</sup> His Kitab-i-Yamini, tr. James Reynolds (London, 1858), originally in Arabic, extols the glorious reign of Mahmüd.

authority and paved the way for the advent of the Buwayhid régime.

It was the eighth 'Abbâsid caliph, al-Mu'tasim (833-42), son of Hârûn by a Turkish slave, who first surrounded himself with a bodyguard of Turkish recruits from Transoxiana. The guard numbered four thousand. Originally brought in to counterbalance the influence of the soldiers from Khurâsân, to whom the 'Abbâsids owed the caliphate, the yearly import of Turks became an even greater menace to its integrity. Al-Mansûr's "city of peace" became a city of turmoil. Facing the danger of a native uprising in Baghdâd against the haughty and oppressive conduct of his guard, the caliph in 836 removed his seat of government sixty miles farther up the Tigris to Sâmarra.<sup>1</sup> Originally Assyrian, the name was changed by him to Surra Man Ra'a (pleased is he who sees it) under which name it appears as a mint city on 'Abbâsid coins. It was wittily whispered at the time that what the new name really meant was "he who sees it (with the Turks settled therein) is pleased (with Baghdâd well rid of them)".

Sâmarra was beautified by palaces and mosques erected mainly by al-Mu'tasim and his son al-Mutawakkil (847-61). It remained the capital for fifty-six years (836-92), during the reigns of eight successive caliphs, and its ruins are the most imposing 'Abbâsid monuments extant.<sup>2</sup>

#### Genealogical Table of the 'Abbasid Caliphs at Sâmarra

I	L
Muhammad 9. Al-Wathiq '	(842-7)
8. Al-Mu'tasim (833-42)	
i	
12. Al-Musta'in	
(862-6)	

|

11. Al-Muntasir (861-2)

|

10. Al-Mutawakkil (847-61)

|

|

13. Al-Mu'tazz (866-9)

14. Al-Muhtadi (869-70)

15. Al-Mu'tamid (870-92)

The rise of this body of predominantly Turkish soldiery, which played a part in the caliphate not unlike that of the

<sup>1</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 1179-81; Mas'udi, vol. vii, pp. 118 seq.y Yaqut, Buldan, vol. iii, pp. 16-17.

<sup>2</sup> Maqdisi, pp. 122-3; Ernst Herzfeld, *Der Wandschmuck der Bauten von Samarra* (Berlin, 1923).

praetorian guard in Rome and the Janissaries in Turkey, marked the beginning of the end of caliphal power. The caliph lived in his new capital almost as their prisoner. The murder of al-Mutawakkil by them in December 861, at the instigation of his son,<sup>1</sup> was the first in a series of events in the course of which the mighty structure of the 'Abbasid dynasty—already shaken— stood face to face with imminent collapse. Al-Mutawakkil was the first caliph in the period of decline. After him we find caliphs made and unmade by troops, chiefly Turkish, under generals mostly slaves, striving

for mastery. Through their influence over these slaves the women of the court came to play an important political role and thus added to the confusion. In the case of the weak and vacillating al-Musta'in (862-6), who eventually fled to Baghdad pursued by his guard after he had been besieged and forced to abdicate, his slave-mother shared with two Turkish generals the supreme power.<sup>2</sup> The mother of his successor al-Mu'tazz (866-9) refused to pay out the 50,000 dinars which might have saved the life of her caliph son, though she kept in a subterranean cellar a cache of 1,000,000 dinars in addition to priceless jewellery.<sup>3</sup> For two centuries the history of the disintegrating caliphate presents a confused picture of nominal rulers ascending the throne with no power and descending to the grave unregretted. Peace and security, if anywhere, were enjoyed only in those outlying provinces where a governor, practically independent, held the reins with an iron hand.

One of the most spectacular and sanguinary episodes of the servile period was the rebellion of the Zanj<sup>4</sup> slaves. These were negroes<sup>war</sup> imported from East Africa and employed in the saltpetre mines on the lower Euphrates. The leader {sahib al-Zanf) was one \*Ali ibn-Muhammad, a wily pretender, probably of Arab origin. Taking advantage of disturbed conditions in the capital and the uprising of the discontented and wretched miners, he claimed in September 869 that he was an 'Alid called to their deliverance by visions and occult science. One band of slaves after another rallied under the banner of the new Messiah—"the rogue" and "Allah's enemy" of our main informant, al-Tabari.<sup>5</sup> Army after

<sup>1</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 1452-65; abbr. ibn-al-Athir, vol. vii, pp. 60-64.

<sup>2</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 1512-13, copied by ibn-al-Athir, vol. vii, pp. 80-81.

<sup>3</sup> Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 1718-19.

<sup>4</sup> From Pers. Zang (Ethiopia), whence Zangbàr, Ar. Zanjabàr, corrupted to

Zanzibar.

<sup>6</sup> Vol. »>. PP- U86.

army was sent to suppress the strange rebellion, but being on favourable and familiar territory, a patchwork of marshes intersected with canals, the negroes overcame them all and, in accordance with a Kharijite doctrine now adopted by their leader, mercilessly put all prisoners and non-combatants to the sword.<sup>1</sup> During fourteen years (870-83) of the reign of al-Mu'tamid (870-92) this servile war raged. The estimates of those who perished vary, some exceeding half a million. After one engagement the unclaimed heads of Moslems were so numerous that the negroes dumped them into a canal which carried them into al-Basrah, where they could be identified by relatives and friends.<sup>2</sup> Al-Basrah, Wasit, al-Ahwaz and al-Ubullah lay desolate. Not until the caliph's brother al-Muwaffaq had taken personal charge of the operations was the backbone of opposition broken. In 883 al-Mukhtarah, the fortress built by the leader, was stormed and he himself slain. "Thus ended one of the bloodiest and most destructive rebellions which the history of Western Asia records."<sup>3</sup> It was in the course of this war that Egypt, one of the first and fairest provinces, fell away from the caliphate under the rule of ibn-Tulun.

The amir al-umarà' in power

The restoration of Baghdad as capital under al-Mu'tadid (892-902), after ephemeral Samarra had functioned as such

for over half a century, changed the scene but not the current of events. The real power continued to slip from caliphal to military hands. The period saw the rise of 'Abdullah ibn-al-Mu'tazz, who after contesting the caliphate with his second cousin al-Muqtadir had the unique distinction of holding office under the title al-Murtada for one day only (December 17, 908), after which he was deposed and killed. The one-day caliph was more of a poet and belletrist than a politician. Of his many works cited by al-Fihris<sup>F</sup> and ibn-Khallikan<sup>5</sup> only a few have survived.

The twenty-four years of al-Muqtadir's reign (908-32) were marked by the rise and fall of thirteen vizirs, some of whom were put to death.<sup>6</sup> To add to the confusion the caliph's Turkish mother constantly interfered in state affairs. One of these vizirs was ibn-Muqlah, a founder of Arabic calligraphy.<sup>7</sup> Another was

<sup>1</sup> Mas'udi, vol. viii, pp. 31, 58-61.  
pp. 1785-6.

<sup>2</sup> Tabari, vol. iii,

<sup>8</sup> Noldeke, *Sketches from Eastern History*, tr. J. S. Black (London, 1892), p. 174.

<sup>4</sup> P. 116.  
360 seq.

<sup>6</sup> Vol. i, p. 462.

<sup>8</sup> Fakhri, pp.

<sup>7</sup> Miskawayh, vol. i, pp. 185 seq.; Sabi', *IFuzara'*, ed. Amedroz, pp. 109, 326, 359-60.

\*Ali ibn-eIsa, who in an age of corruption and oppression under a régime of cruelty and torture stands alone in his integrity and ability. In the two vizirates of \*Ali, which lasted five years, he materially improved the finances of the state by rigid economy and set an example of high efficiency which found no imitators.<sup>1</sup> It was during the caliphate of al-

Muqtadir that both the Fâtimid 'Ubaydullâh (909) in North Africa and the Umayyad ʿAbd-al-Rahmân III (929) in Spain assumed the dignity and insignia of the caliphate, thus creating the unusual phenomenon of three recognized rival caliphs in the Moslem world at the same time. The weak and incapable al-Muqtadir (lit. the mighty [by the help of God]) left the affairs of the state in the hands of his chief of bodyguard Mu'nis al-Muzaffar,<sup>2</sup> a eunuch on whom he bestowed a newly created title, amir al-umara' (the commander of the commanders). Mu'nis soon became the real ruler. He dethroned al-Muqtadir and appointed his half-brother al-Qahir.<sup>3</sup> After a brief restoration al-Muqtadir met his death at the hands of Berber soldiers who carried his head in triumph to their leader, Mu'nis.<sup>4</sup> Al-Qâhir (932-4) fared no better than his predecessor. When deposed the second time he was blinded and was last seen begging for alms in the streets of Baghdad.<sup>5</sup> Two of his successors, al-Muttaqi (940-44) and al-Mustakfi (944-6), followed him through the same process into the realm of darkness—all through the influence of the amir al-umara'.<sup>6</sup> At one time Baghdad presented the spectacle of three personages who had once held the highest office in Islam but were now deposed, blinded and objects of public charity. The amir al-umara of al-Radi (934-40) went so far as to have his name joined with the caliph's in the Friday prayer—a novel procedure in Islamic history.<sup>7</sup> Al-Râdi was one of the few caliphs of the period to escape deposition, but he did not escape death at the hands of the soldiery. By the Arab annalists he was considered "the last of the real caliphs", by which they meant the last to deliver the

<sup>1</sup> See Harold Bowen, *The Life and Times of Ali Ibn Îsa> the Good Vizier*



<sup>2</sup> "The victorious." Miskawayh, vol. i, p. 76; Tabari, vol. Hi, p. 2199.

<sup>1</sup> Miskawayh, vol. i, p. 193; ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii, pp. 147<sup>8</sup>-

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii, p. 179.

<sup>5</sup> Miskawayh, vol. i, pp. 291-2; ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii, pp. 209, 211, 33<sup>\*3</sup>» Fakhri<sup>^</sup> p. 375; Mas'üdi, vol. viii, pp. 287 !>eq.

- Miskawayh, vol. ii, p. 72; Mas'üdi, vol. viii, p. 409.

<sup>7</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii; p. 241.

Friday oration and conduct certain affairs of state.<sup>1</sup> He was also the last whose poetry has been preserved. With him vanished the last vestiges of power and dignity that were left to his office. The generalissimo, amir al-ttmara , was now well established as the actual ruler of the Moslem state.<sup>2</sup>

## 5- The

### Buwayhid dynasty

An even darker chapter in the history of the caliphate was opened in December 945, when the Caliph al-Mustakfi (944-6) received in Baghdad the victorious Ahmad ibn-Buwayh and made him his amir al-umara with the honorific title of Mu'izz-al-Dawlah (he who renders the state mighty).

Ahmad's father, abu-Shuja' Buwayh, claimed descent from the ancient Sasanid kings, probably, as in most such cases, to bolster up dynastic prestige.<sup>3</sup> He was the chief of a warlike horde consisting mainly of Daylamite highlanders from the mountainous region on the southern shore of the Caspian Sea and had been for some time in the service of

the Samanids. His three sons, including Ahmad, gradually worked their way southward, occupying Isbahan, then Shiraz with its province (934) and in the following two years the provinces of al-Ahwaz (present-day Khuzistan) and Karman. Shiraz was chosen as capital of the new dynasty. At the advance of Ahmad into Baghdad (945) the Turkish guard fled, but the lot of the caliph did not improve under the tutelage of his new masters, the Shi'ite Persians. Though his official position was simply that of amir al-umara , Mu'izz-al-Dawlah insisted that he be mentioned along with the caliph in the khutbah. He even had his name stamped on the coinage.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fakhri, p. 380; Tanûkhi, p. 146.

<sup>3</sup> A genealogical table of Baghdad caliphs under the military régime:

16. Al-Mu'tadid (892-902)

17. Al-Muktafi

(902-8)

22. Al-Mustakfi (944-6)

18. Al-Muqtadir (908-32)

F

I

20. Al-Rädi

(934-40)

19. Al-Qahir (932-4)

f

l

## 21. Al-Muttaqi (940-44)

[1](#)

See ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, pp. 38-45; Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 1139 seq.

[2](#)

\* See above, pp. 123-4.

[3](#)

A copy of his orders is preserved in Tabari, vol. iii, pp. 1112-16.

429

[4](#)

Ibn-al-Athir, vol. v, pp. 196-7.

[5](#)

ILid. p. 197; Tabari, vol. ii, p. 1733.

[6](#)

<sup>8</sup> See above, p. 359.  
1131 seq.

[7](#) Tabari, vol. iii, pp.

[7](#)

<sup>6</sup> For his “heresies” see Shahrastani, pp. 37-42; Baghdadi, ed. Hitti, pp. 102-9.

[8](#)

<sup>6</sup> Ibn-Idazm, vol. iv, p. 148; al-Khayyif, Kitab-al Intifar, ed. H. S. Nyberg

[9](#)

(Cairo, 1925), index.

[10](#)

Consult Shahrastani, pp. 46-8; Baghdadi, pp. 109-10.

[11](#)

See his Maqalat al-Islamiyin, ed. H. Ritter (Constantinople, 1929), pp. 155-278; Shahrastani, pp. 65-75.

[12](#)

See Shahrastani, pp. 54 seq.-, Baghdadi, p. 121.

[13](#)

Al-Munqidh min al-Dalal, ed. A. Schmolders (Paris, 1842), pp. 4-5; cf. C. Field, The Confessions of Al Ghazzali (London, 1909), pp. 12-13. The autobiographical part of this work runs almost parallel with the experience of St. Augustine

[14](#)

4 vols. (Cairo, 1334). There are several other editions.

[15](#)

' (Cairo, 1322.) \* Ed. M. Bouyges (Beirut, 1927). [18](#) 2nd ed. (Cairo, 1327).

[16](#)

From Ar. suf, wool, to denote the practice of assuming a woollen robe on entering

[17](#)

the mystic life. Theodor Noldckc in Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenlandischen

[18](#)

Gesellschaft, vol. 48 (1<sup>94</sup>), pp. 45-8.

[19](#)

Fakhri, p. 325; Mas'udi, vol. vii, pp. 302-3.

[20](#)

\* Ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, p. 278. [25](#) Literally "caution", "fear". Koran, 3 : 27.

[21](#)

<sup>4</sup> Shahrastani, p. 92, l. 15, p. 93, l. 6. [69](#) Goldziher, Vorlesungen, p. 203.

[22](#)

See above, p. 248. Baghdadi, Uṣul, vol. i, pp. 277-9.

[23](#)

<sup>7</sup> Shahrastani, pp. 108-9; ibn-Khaldun, Muqaddamah, pp. 164-5.

[24](#)

other Moslems by the titles sharif (noble) and sayyid (lord) respectively and by the right to wear green turbans. The Sharifs of Makkah, whose scion was the Sunnite

[25](#)

King Fay? al of al-Traq, as well as the Sharifs of Morocco, represent the line of the eldest son of Fapmah.

[26](#)

Cf. Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 499.

[27](#)

Ya'qubi, vol. ii, p. 55<sup>[26](#)</sup> ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 577\*  
#

[28](#)

Shahrastani, p. 128; Baghdadi, ed. Hitti, pp. 60-61; ibn-Hazm, vol. iv, p. 138;

al-Nawbakhti, Firaq al-Shi'ah, ed. Hellmut Ritter (Constantinople, 1931), pp. 84-5. Cf. ibn-Khaldun, Muqaddamah, p. 166. The cave (sirdab} is still shown among the ruins of Samarra.

[29](#)

See genealogical tree on next page. The belief in the return of the Mahdi lent itself to imposture and produced many pretenders in all periods of Moslem history.

[30](#)

\* Ibn-al-Jawzi, Ncqd, pp. 19-20. Cf. Baghdadi, ed. Hitti, p. 15«

[31](#)

From Ar. hashshashicn, those addicted to the use of hashish, a stupefying hemp.

[32](#)

<sup>3</sup> Al-da'wah al-jadidah.-, Shahrastani, p. 150.

[33](#)

Hence his surname al-Razi; ibn-al-Athir, vol. x, p. 369.

[34](#)

Ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, p. 304, vol. x, p. 161.

'■ Variant fidawi, one ready to offer his life for a cause. Cf. ibn-BaHutah, vol. i, pp. 100-7. ' \* '

[35](#)

For other Aghlabids see Lane-Poole, p. 37; Zambaur, pp. 67, 68.

[36](#)

\* Ibn-Tdhâri, vol. i, pp. 142-6; ibn-Khaldün, vol. iv, pp. 205-7; ibn-abi-Zar\*, p. 61.

[37](#)

\* Ibn-Khaldün, vol. iii, p. 295, vol. iv, p. 297.

[38](#)

Ya'qübi, vol. ii, pp. 615 seq.', Tabari, vol. iii, p. 1697« ..

[39](#)

»Of. lists in Kindi, ed. Guest, pp. 6-212; Suyüti, Husn, vol. ii, pp. 2-10; de

[40](#)

Zambaur, pp. 25-7. [40](#) Ya qübi, vol. ii, p. 624.

[41](#)

\* Ibn-Khaldün, vol. iv, pp. 300-301; Kindi, pp. 219 seq.  
.

[42](#)

\* Yâqüt, vol. iii, pp. qoq-8. # Maqrizi, ed. Wiet,  
vol. i, pp. 247-50.

[43](#)

<sup>7</sup> Maqrizi (Bûlâq), vol. i, pp. 313 seq.

[44](#)



Ibn-Taghri-Birdi, al-Nujum al-Zahir ah fi Muluk Misr w-al-Qahirah, ed. T. G. J. Juynboll, vol. ii (Leyden, 1855), p. 11; Kindi, p. 216. '

[45](#)

Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 97; ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. ii, p. 8.

[46](#)

The best description of this mosque was written about 1420 by Maqrizi (Bulaq), vol. ii, pp. 265 seq.\ utilized by Suyuti, Husn, vol. ii, pp. 152-4.

[47](#)

One of seventeen sons and thirty-three children; ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. ii, p. 21; Suyuti, Husn, vol. ii, p. 11.

[48](#)

Ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. ii, pp. 57-8; Maqrizi, vol. i, pp. 316-17.

[49](#)

<sup>G</sup> Ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. ii, p. 56.      [50](#) Ibid. pp. 56-7.

[50](#)

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. pp. 60-61.  
i, p. 317.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. pp. 58-9; Maqrizi, vol.

[51](#)

Jaysh (895—6) 4. Harun (S96-904) Qatr-al-Nada 5.  
Shaybân

[52](#)

\*

(904-5)

[53](#)

Ibn-Sa'id, al-Mughrib fi Hula al-Maghrib, ed. K. L. Tallqvist (Leyden, 1899),

P-5-

” ,

[54](#)

Kindi, p. 288; Miskawayh, vol. i, pp. 332, 366, n.; ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. ii, p. 270.

[55](#)

' Ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, pp. 185-9; ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, pp. 314-15; ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. ii, p. 373.

[56](#)

Diwan, ed. Fr. Dieterici (Berlin, 1861), pp. 623-732; ibn-Sa'id, pp. 45-6.

[57](#)

2. Abu-al-Qäsim Unüjür 3. 'Ali 4. Abu-al-Misk Käfür (946-60) (960-66) (966-8)

[58](#)

5. Ahmad

(968-9)

The stars indicate a master-slave relationship.

“Unüjür” is transmitted in several variants. Cf. ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. ii, p. 315; Kindi, p. 294; ibn-Khaldün, vol. iv, p. 314; ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii, p. 343; Miskawayh, vol. ii, p. 104. See also F. Wüstenfeld, *Die Statthalter von Ägypten zur Zeit der Chalifen*, pt. iv (Göttingen, 1876), p. 37.

[59](#)

Tabari, vol. iii, p. 2141.

[60](#)

\* 1. Sayf-al-Dawlah abu-al-Hasan 'Ali (944-67)

1

2. Sa'd-al-Dawlah abu-al-Ma'äli Sharif (967-9[58](#))

3. Sa'id-al-Dawlah abu-al-Fadä'il Sa'id (991-1001)

[61](#)

Tabari, vol. iii, p. 829; ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 424. Cf. Mas'udi, vol. vi, p. 423

[62](#)

\* Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 422; ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi, p. 270.

[63](#)

' Ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi, pp. 255, 270.

[64](#)

Mas'udi, vol. viii, p. 42; T<sup>a</sup>bari, vol. iii, p. 1880.

461

[65](#)

Mustawfi-i-Qazwini, vol. i, p. 393 = vol. ii, p. 78.

[66](#)

\* Ibid. vol. i, pp. 395 seq.; Biruni, Tahqiq, p. ii; M. Nazim, The Life and Times of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna (Cambridge, 1931), pp. 86 seq.

[67](#)

See Hilal al- $\mathfrak{S}$ abi', Ta'rikh. al-Wuzara (supplement to Miskawayh, Taj drib, vol. iii), ed. Amedroz, pp. 341-5.

[68](#)

Mustawfi-i-Qazwini, vol. i, p. 395.                      ' Ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, p. 92.

[69](#)

<sup>8</sup> The numberless descendants of al-Hasan and al-Husayn are distinguished from

<sup>8</sup> Cf. ibn-Khallikän, vol. i, p. 98; Fakhri, p. 376; ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii, p. 197; Mustawfi-i-Qazwini, vol. i, pp. 413-14; Friedrich Wilken, *Mirchond's Geschichte der Sultane aus dem Geschlechte Bujeh* (Berlin, 1835), P« \*3 (Pers, text), p. 58 (tr.) (extract from Mirkhwänd, *Rawdat al-Safa*).

<sup>4</sup> Miskawayh, vol. ii, p. 158; ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii, p. 337; Wilken, p. 21 (text), p. 66 (tr.). C . Miskawayh, vol. ii, p. 396; ibn-Khallikän, vol, ii, p. 159,

In January 946, the unfortunate al-Mustakfi was blinded and deposed by Mu'izz-al-Dawlah, who chose as the new caliph al-Mutf (946-74). Shi'ah festivals were now established, particularly the public mourning on the anniversary of al-Husayn's death (tenth of Muharram) and the rejoicing on that of the Prophet's alleged appointment of 'Ali as his successor at Ghadr al-Khummm.<sup>1</sup> The caliphate now passed through the period of its deepest humiliation with the commander of the believers a mere puppet in the hands of a schismatic commander of the commanders. The Buwayhids, however, were not the first in the history of Islam to assume the title of sultan, as is sometimes claimed.<sup>2</sup> They satisfied themselves, according to the testimony of their coins, with amir or malik affixed to such honorific surnames as Mu'izz-al-Dawlah, Tmad-al-Dawlah (prop of the state) and Rukn-al-Dawlah (pillar of the state), appellations which were simultaneously bestowed on the three sons of Buwayh by the caliph. After them similar pompous surnames became the fashion. The dignity of amir al-umara was also held by several of Mu'izz' Buwayhid successors, even though it had become nothing more than an honorific fiction.

Throughout their century or so of supremacy (945-1055) the Buwayhids made and unmade caliphs at will. Al-Traq

was governed as a province from the Buwayhid capital, Shiraz in Faris. In Baghdad they maintained several magnificent palaces under the collective name dar al-mamlakah (the abode of the kingdom).<sup>3</sup> Baghdad was no longer the hub of the<sup>1</sup> Moslem world, for not only Shiraz but Ghaznah, Cairo and Cordova were now sharing its international pre-eminence.

The Buwayhid power reached its zenith under 'Adud-al-'Adud-ai-Dawlah (the supporting arm of the state, 949-83), a son of Dawlah Rukn. 'Adud was not only the greatest Buwayhid but also the most illustrious ruler of his time. Under his sceptre he united in 977 the several petty kingdoms that had risen under Buwayhid rulers in Persia and al-Traq, creating a state that approached in size an empire. 'Adud-al-Dawlah married the daughter of the Caliph al-Ta'i' and had the caliph marry his daughter (980),

<sup>1</sup> A spring between Makkah and al-Madinah where Shi'ite tradition asserts the Prophet declared, "Whomsoever I am lord of, his lord is 'Ali also". Ibn-Sa'd, vol. v, p. 235; Mas'udi, Tanbih., pp. 255-6. In memory of this declaration the Shi'ites observed a feast on the 18th of dhu-al-I.ijjah.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. above, p. 464; below, p. 474. ' Khatib, vol. i, pp. 105-7. hoping thereby to have a descendant of his assume the caliphate.<sup>1 2</sup> \*Adud was the first ruler in Islam to bear the title shahanshah? Although he kept his court in Shiraz he beautified Baghdad, repaired canals which had become filled up and erected in several other cities mosques, hospitals and public buildings, as reported by the meritorious historian Miskawayh,<sup>3</sup> Adud's treasurer.<sup>4</sup> For his charitable enterprises \*Adud appropriated funds from his state treasury. One

interesting building of his was the shrine (mashhad?) on the presumed tomb of \*Ali. But the most significant was the famous hospital in Baghdad, al-Bimaristan al-ÍAdudi, which he completed in 978-9 and endowed with 100,000 dinars. The hospital had a staff of twenty-four physicians who also functioned as a medical faculty.<sup>5</sup> Poets such as al-Muta-nabbi' sang ÍAdud's glory and authors, including the grammarian abu-\*Ali al-Farisi, who wrote for him the Kitab al-Idah (book of explanation), dedicated to him their works.<sup>6</sup> In his cultivation of the arts of peace \*Adud found an able collaborator in his Christian vizir Nasr ibn-Hárün, who with the caliph's authorization erected and repaired churches and monasteries.<sup>7</sup>

The precedent for literary and scientific patronage set by 'Adud-al-Dawlah was followed by his son Sharaf-al-Dawlah<sup>8</sup> (983-89). In imitation of al-Ma'mün, Sharaf constructed one year before his death a famous observatory. Another son of \*Adud, his second successor, Baha'-al-Dawlah<sup>9</sup> (989-1012), who in 991 deposed the Caliph al-Ta'i' whose vast wealth he coveted, had an enlightened Persian vizir in the person of Sábür ibn-Ardashir. Sábür built in 993 at Baghdad an academy with a library of 10,000 books,<sup>10</sup> which the Syrian poet al-Ma\*arri used when a student in that city. The Ikhwán al-Safá', be it also remembered, flourished under the Buwayhid regime. But the state itself was on its downward course. The wars between Baha\*, Sharaf and their third brother, Samsam-al-Dawlah,<sup>11 12</sup> the dynastic and family quarrels carried on among their successors and the Buwayhid Shi'ite proclivities, which were deeply resented in Sunnite Baghdad, led to the fall of the dynasty. In 1055 the Saljuq Tughril Beg entered Baghdad and put an end to Buwayhid rule. The last of the dynasty in al-'Iraq, al-Malik al-

Rahim (the merciful king, 1048-55), ended his days in confinement.

The subjoined tree shows the genealogical relationship of the 'Abbasid caliphs under Buwayhid supremacy (945-1055):

16. Al-Mu'tadid these nomads settled in the region of Bukhara, where they fervently embraced Sunnite Islam. Slowly but surely Saljuq and after him his sons fought their way through the realms of the Ilekh Khans and Samanids.<sup>1</sup> A grandson of Saljuq, Tughril,<sup>2</sup> ventured with his brother as far as Khurasan. In 1037 the two brothers wrested Marw and Naysabur from Ghaznawid hands. Balkh, Jurjan, Tabaristan and Khwarizm, as well as Hamadhan, al-Rayy and Isbahan were speedily added. The Buwayhid house tumbled before them. On December 18, 1055, Tughril Beg at the head of his wild Turkoman tribes stood at the gate of Baghdad. Al-Basasiri, the Turkish general and military governor of Baghdad under the last Buwayhids, left the capital<sup>3</sup> and the Caliph al-Qa'im (1031-1075) hastened to receive the Saljuq invader as a deliverer.

17. Al-Muktafi

22. Al-Mustakfi

(944-6)

Tughril in power

After an absence of a year Tughril returned to Baghdad and was received with elaborate ceremonies. Wearing the mantle and holding the cane of the Prophet, the caliph took his seat on a platform behind a curtain which was lifted at the approach of the conqueror. Tughril sat on an adjoining



platform and communicated with the caliph through an interpreter. The conqueror was made regent of the empire and hailed as “king of the East and of the West”.<sup>4</sup> His official title was to be al-sultan (he with authority, sultan).<sup>5</sup> The caliphate now passed under a new and more benevolent tutelage.

Taking advantage of the temporary absence of Tughril on an expedition to the north, al-Basasiri, who had in the meantime espoused the Fatimid cause, returned in 1058 at the head of his Daylamite and other troops and reoccupied the capital. The Caliph al-Qa'im was forced to sign a document renouncing his rights and the rights of all other 'Abbasids in favour of the rival Fatimid al-Mustansir (1035-94) in Cairo, to whom he now sent

<sup>1</sup> Mustawfi-i-Qazwini, pp. 434-6, tr. pp. 93-4; Joannes A. Vullers, *Mirchondi historia Seldschukidarum* (Giessen, 1837), pp. I seq. (ext. from Razvdat al-Safa).

<sup>2</sup> His father's name was Mika'il, his brother's Dawud (David) and his uncle's Musa; ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, p. 322. Such names, noticeable among early Saljuqs, show Christian, probably Nestorian, influence. See Qazwini, *Athar*, p. 394.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, pp. 107-8; ibn-Taghri-Birdi, ed. Popper, vol. ii, pt. 2, p. 225.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, p. 436; ibn-Taghri-Birdi, op. cit. p. 233; Tmad-al-Din (al-Isfahani), *abr. al-Bundari*, *Taivarikh Al Saljuq*, ed. M. Th. Houtsma (Leyden, 1899), p. 14.

<sup>6</sup> Al-Rawandi, *Rahat al-Sudur*, ed. Muhammad Iqbal (London, 1921), p. 105. Tughril was the first Moslem ruler whose coins bore this title. Stanley Lane-Poole, *Catalogue of Oriental*

Coins in the British Museum, ed. R. S. Poole, vol. iii (London, 1877), PP- 28-9. With the Saljuqs "sultan" became a regular sovereign title. the emblems of the caliphate, including the mantle and other sacred relics. Al-Qa'im's turban and a beautiful window from his palace were also sent as trophies to Cairo.<sup>1</sup> On his return, however, Tughril reinstated al-Qa'im and made al-Basasiri pay for his disloyalty with his life (1060). The Daylamite troops were disbanded and the Buwayhid power was for ever crushed.

The reigns of Tughril (1037-63), his nephew and successor Alp Arslan (1063-72) and the latter's son Malikshah (1072-92) cover the most brilliant period of Saljuq ascendancy over the Moslem East. As fresh Turkish tribesmen swelled their armies the Saljuqs extended their conquests in all directions until once more Western Asia was united into one Moslem kingdom and the fading glory of Moslem arms revived. A new race from Central Asia was now pouring its blood into the struggle of Islam for world supremacy. The story of these barbarian infidels, setting their feet on the necks of the followers of the Prophet and at the same time accepting the religion of the conquered and becoming its ardent champions, was not a unique instance in the chequered annals of that religion. Their cousins the Mongols of the thirteenth century, as well as their other kinsmen the Ottoman Turks of the early fourteenth century, repeated the same process. In the darkest hour of political Islam religious Islam has been able to achieve some of its most brilliant victories.

" In the second year of his reign Alp Arslan (hero-lion) captured Alp Ani, the capital of Christian Armenia, then a Byzantine pro-<sup>rsan</sup> vince.<sup>2</sup> Soon after that he resumed hostilities with the everlasting Byzantine foe. In 1071 Alp won the decisive battle of Manzikart (Malazkird, Malasjird),

north of Lake Van in Armenia, and took the Emperor Romanus Diogenes prisoner.<sup>3</sup> Saljuq nomadic tribes, the first Moslems to gain a permanent footing in “the land of the Romans”, began now to settle in the plateau regions of Asia Minor, which henceforth became part and parcel of ddr al-Islam, (abode of Islam). These Saljuq nomads laid the basis of the Turkification of Asia Minor. It was a cousin of Alp, Sulayman ibn-Qutlumish by name, who was later put in charge of this new territory, where he established (1077) the sultanate of the Rum<sup>4</sup> Saljuqs. Far-off Nicaea (Nlqiyah, Tur. Izniq) was

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 622.  
25 seq.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. x, pp.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. pp. 44 seq.-, 'Imad-al-Din, pp. 38 seq.; Vasiliev, Byzantine Empire, vol. i,

p. 43<sup>1\*</sup>

\* Ar. rum is the equivalent of “Romans”. See above, p. 199-

first made the capital, and it v<sup>r</sup>as from that city that Qilij Arslan, son and successor of Sulayman, was driven by the hordes of the first Crusade. After 1084 Iconium (Quniyah, Konieh), the richest and most beautiful Byzantine city in Asia Minor, became the Saljuq capital in that land. In the meantime the Saljuq dynasty of Syria (1094-1117), founded by Tutush, son of Alp, in 1094, was contributing its share towards checking the advance of the first Crusade. Aleppo had been held since 1070 by Alp.<sup>13</sup> There he had checked the advance of the Fatimid power, from which he also recovered Makkah and al-Madinah.

Saljuq power at its zenith

The first two Saljuq sultans did not live in Baghdad but exercised their authority through a military resident. Alp never visited or saw the caliph's capital.<sup>14</sup> His seat of government was Isbahan; Marw and al-Rayy were seats of his predecessor. It was not until the winter of 1091, shortly before the end of Malik-shah's reign, that the Saljuq seat of government was moved to the capital of the caliphs. The caliph became more than -ever a puppet who moved at the will of the sultan, a puppet bedecked in all the regalia of high office and propped on the imperial throne by foreign hands. The name of the sultan was mentioned with that of the caliph in the Friday sermon. In 1087 the Caliph al-Muqtadi (1075-94) married the daughter of Sultan Malikshah, and when a son was born Malikshah planned, but unsuccessfully, to combine in his grandson the caliphate and the sultanate on a common throne.<sup>15</sup>

It was Malikshah (1072-92) under whom Saljuq power reached its meridian. "His domain extended in length from Kashghar, a town at the extreme end of the land of the Turks, to Jerusalem, and in width from Constantinople to the Caspian Sea."<sup>4</sup> In paying boatmen who once ferried him across the Oxus he issued drafts on his agent in Antioch.<sup>5</sup> But Malikshah was more than a ruler of an extensive empire. He built roads and mosques, repaired walls, dug canals and spent large sums on the caravanserais dotting the pilgrimage route to Makkah. According to his biographer all the roads of the great empire were safe—safe enough for caravans, even for one or two men, to travel peacefully and without special protection from Transoxiana to Syria.®

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-Khallikân. vol. ii. p. 443.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 587.

• Ibid. p. 587.

The sanitary measures introduced into Baghdad at this time and credited by ibn-al-Athir <sup>1</sup> to the Caliph al-Muqtadi were more likely initiated by this Saljuq sultan. These measures included the diversion of the dirty water of the public baths from the Tigris into special cesspools and the allotment of special places for cleaning and curing fish. An anecdote preserved in ibn-Khallikan <sup>2</sup> throws light on Malikshah's character. On visiting a mosque in Tus the sultan asked his vizir, Nizam-al-Mulk, who was in his company, what it was that he had prayed for while in the mosque. The latter replied that he had prayed God to grant the sultan victory over his brother, with whom he was then at war. "As for me", remarked Malikshah, "that was not what I prayed for. I only asked God to give victory to him of the two better fitted to rule the Moslems and more beneficial to his subjects."

The guiding hand throughout the administration of Alp Arslan and Malikshah was that of their illustrious Persian vizir, Nizam-al-Mulk (the organization of the kingdom), one of the Ni'am-ai-ornaments of the political history of Islam. If we are to believe <sup>u</sup> ibn-Khallikan, "for the twenty years covering the reign of Malikshah, Nizam-al-Mulk had all the power concentrated in his hand, whilst the sultan had nothing to do but sit on the throne or enjoy the chase."<sup>3</sup>

Although untutored and probably illiterate like his father and grand-uncle, Malikshah at the suggestion of Nizam-al-Mulk called in 1074-5 <sup>a</sup> conference of astronomers at his newly erected observatory and commissioned them to reform the Persian calendar.<sup>4</sup> The result was the remarkable Jalali calendar (tarikhi), so styled after Malikshah, whose full name included Jalal-al-Din (the majesty of religion) abu-al-Fath. This calendar, in the judgment of a modern scholar, is "somewhat more accurate than ours".

Nizam-al-Mulk was himself a cultured and learned man.<sup>6</sup> From his pen we have one of the most remarkable Moslem treatises on the art of government, the Siyasat-namah\* which he composed as a result of a competition suggested by Malikshah.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. x, p. 156.  
255. \_

\* Vol. ii, p. 588.

<sup>8</sup> Vol. i, p.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. x, pp. 67-8. Site of observatory uncertain, possibly in Işbahan, al-Rayy or Naysabur. See above, p. 377

<sup>6</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. x, p. 104; 'Imad-al-Din, p. 30.

• Ed. Charles Schefer (Paris, 1891), tr. Schefer (Paris, 1893).

1 he sultan requested his statesmen to give him in written form the benefit of their opinions as to the nature of good government. Among other notable works in Persian produced during this period were those of Nasir-i-Khusraw (f ca. 1074), the celebrated traveller and Isma'ili propagandist, and of 'Umar al-Khayyam (f 1123-4), the great astronomer-poet who enjoyed the patronage of Nizam and collaborated in the revision of the calendar. But the basis of this Persian vizir's glory is his establishment of the first well-organized academies for higher learning in Islam.<sup>1</sup> Particularly renowned was his Nizamiyah, founded 1065-7 at Baghdad. One of its chairs was once adorned by al-Ghazzali.

Disintegration of the Saljuq realm

The aged Nizam, as we learned before, was one of the earliest prominent victims of an Isma'ili Assassin. With his death in 1092 the period of glory that covered the reigns of the first three Saljuqs ended. For a brief but brilliant span

these three sultans had brought together most of the far-flung lands that had once formed the Islamic state. But the season of glory that Baghdad and Islam enjoyed under them was only an Indian summer. After the death of Malikshah civil wars among his sons and subsequent disturbances weakened the central Saljuq authority and led to the break-up of the house. The Saljuq empire, built on a tribal basis by a people nomadic in their habits and form of organization, could be held together only by some dominant personality. The system of military fiefs regularized in 1087 by Nizam-al-Mulk, according to which grants became and remained hereditary, led to the immediate establishment of semi-independent states. These separate subdivisions attained virtual independence in different parts of the wide kingdom, while the main line, the Great Saljuqs of Persia, maintained a nominal suzerainty down to 1157. One of the chief subdivisions of the family was that of the Persian Traq (1117-94). The Saljuqs of al-Rum in Iconium were superseded after 1300 by the Ottoman Turks—last great representatives of militant Islam—whose tradition relates their origin to the Ghuzz tribe, to which the Saljuqs also belonged. After penetrating into Europe as far as Vienna (1529) and establishing an empire almost as extensive as that of the Arab caliphs, the Ottoman Turks have since the first World War confined their authority to Asia Minor or Anatolia.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 410.

The one permanent contribution of the Saljuq and Ottoman Turks to Islamic religion was a mystic colouring. This is well represented by the several dervish orders which flourished on Turkish soil and maintained ideas of early shamanistic origin with an admixture of indigenous beliefs of Asia Minor and schismatic Christian doctrines. The futilwah [16](#) [17](#) organizations in which Moslem Arab chivalry

sought to express itself took among the Turks a new form, that of the akhis. Originally these akhi organizations may have been economic guilds. It was in akhi hospices that ibn-Battutah<sup>18</sup> was entertained while travelling in Asia Minor.

It may be of interest in this connection to note that the doubleheaded eagle which originated in the brain of some ancient Sumerian priest and passed on very early to the Babylonians and Hittites was some three thousand years later adopted as an emblem by the Saljuq Turks who settled in Hittiteland (Asia Minor). From the Saljuqs it passed on to Byzantium, whence it reached Austria, Prussia and Russia.

The Saljuq domination over the caliphate, which began with Baghdad al-Qa'im in 1055, lasted till 1194 in the reign of al-Nasir.<sup>19</sup> Throughout the greater part of this period the Crusades dragged

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 481.

<sup>a</sup>- Vol. ii, pp. 260, 318. Akhiis not Ar. for "brother" as ibn-Battutah explained but Tur. for "knightly" or "noble." Consult Franz Taeschner in *Islamica*, vol. iv (1929), pp. 1-47, vol. v, pp. 285-333; J- Deny in *Journal asiatique*, ser. 11, vol. xvi (1920), pp. 182-3.

<sup>8</sup> Caliphs under Saljuq domination:

26. Al-Qa'im (1031-75)

i Muhammad

1

27. Al-Muqtadi (1075-94)

I



## 28. Al-Mustazhir (1094-1118)

wearily in Syria-Palestine, but neither Saljuqs nor 'Abbasids interested themselves in the distant affair. To the main body of the Moslem community the Crusades, viewed from headquarters, were but an insignificant episode. When on the fall of Jerusalem (1099) a Moslem delegation arrived in Baghdad to seek aid against the invading Christians tears were shed and kind sympathy was expressed, but no action was taken.<sup>20</sup> The caliph al-Mustazhir (1094-1118) referred the delegation to Sultan Barki-yaruq (1094-1104), Malikshah's second successor and drunkard son,<sup>21</sup> with whom the decline of the sultanate started, and the negotiations ended there. In 1108 a second appeal came, now from Tripoli beset by the Crusaders. The delegation was headed by the chief of the beleaguered city, but its mission was as futile as the preceding one. Three years later, when the Franks captured certain vessels from Egypt carrying goods consigned to merchants in Aleppo, al-Mustazhir, on the urgent request of an Aleppine delegation, which smashed the pulpit and interfered with the conduct of prayer in the mosque which the sultan was attending, bestirred himself and sent a handful of troops which, of course, accomplished nothing.<sup>22</sup> Thus did "the commander of the believers" and his Saljuq sultan stand passively by while the most spectacular drama in the history of Christian-Islamic relations was being enacted.

Later, during the caliphate of al-Muqtafi (1136-60), when the Crusades raged furiously, the hard-pressed Moslem leader Zangi<sup>23</sup> made urgent appeals to Baghdad, which in response to popular demand yielded a few thousand recruits. Meanwhile Zangi's warlike son Nur-al-Din and the famous Salah-al-Din (Saladin) were turning their arms successfully not only against the Christians but also against the schismatic Fatimids in Egypt. By 1171 Salah-al-Din had

put an end to the Fatimid dynasty and, as a loyal Sunnite, substituted the name of the 'Abbasid caliph al-Mustadi' in the khutbah in Egypt and Syria. Thereby was the nominal supremacy of the 'Abbasid caliphs once more recognized in these lands.

To the successor of al-Mustadi\*, al-Näsir, Saläh-al-Din sent after the decisive battle of Hittin (1187) several Frankish prisoners and a part of the booty, including a bronze cross overlaid with gold said to contain some of the wood of the true cross. The caliph buried this cross in Baghdad.<sup>1</sup>

Al-Näsir, whose rule from 1180 to 1225 was the longest in The shahs 'Abbäsid annals,<sup>2</sup> made a faint and final attempt to restore the khwärizm caliphate to something like its ancient self. The endless internal broils among the Saljüq princes and the fresh recognition accorded the 'Abbäsid caliphate by the hero Saläh-al-Din gave al-Näsir the semblance of an opportunity. He proceeded to impose his will on the capital, making a display of high living and sponsoring a programme of lavish building. Under his patronage flourished a special order of sworn brotherhood, futüwah, a sort of knighthood of chivalry, whose organization he reformed. The brotherhood traced its origin to 'Ali and comprised men of birth and distinction, mostly descendants of the Prophet's son-in-law. Members (Jityän) were initiated in a special ceremony and wore distinctive garments.<sup>3</sup> Yazid ibn-Mu'äwiyah was one of the first in Islam to win the title fata al- Arab, the paladin of the Arabs, which at that time had no technical significance.

Al-Näsir's attempts, however, were but the flicker of an expiring flame. His first serious mistake was made when he instigated Takash, ruler of Khwärizm (1172-1200) and member of the Turkish dynasty of the Khwärizm Shähs,<sup>4</sup> to

attack the Saljüqs of the Persian Träq,<sup>5</sup> who had succeeded the Great Saljüqs of Persia in ruling Baghdäd. The battle between Takash and the Saljüq Sultan Tughril (1177-94) was fought in 1194 and

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. xi, p. 353; abu-Shämah, vol. ii, pp. 76, 139.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Mustawfi-i-Qazwini, vol. i, p. 369. The caliphate of al-Qä'im (1031-75) was the second longest among the 'Abbäsids. The Fätimid al-Mustansir (1035-94) nominally holds the record in Moslem annals, but as ibn-al-Athir (vol. xii, p. 286) points out this caliph was only seven years old when he was installed. As for 'Abd-al-Rahman III (912-61), of Cordova, he did not proclaim himself caliph until 929.

<sup>3</sup> Fakhri, p. 434; ibn-al-Athir, vol. xii, p. 268; ibn-Jubayr, p. 280. See Hermann Thorning, *Beiträge zur Kenntniss des islamischen Vereinstvesens auf Grund von Bast Madad et-Taufiq* (Berlin, 1913); H. Ritter in *Der Islam*, vol. x (1920), pp. 244-50.

<sup>4</sup> The founder of this dynasty, destined for over a hundred years to play the leading role in the history of Middle Asia, was a slave from Ghaznah who served as cupbearer for the Saljüq Malikshäh and was appointed by him to the governorship of Khwärizm. Juwayni, pt. 2 (Leyden, 1916), p. 3; ibn-al-Athir, vol. x, pp. 182-3.

xT <sup>5</sup> Al-Träq al-'Ajami (i.e. Media), so called under the Saljüqs to distinguish it from al-'Iräq al-'Arabi. See above, p. 330, n. 2.

resulted in the defeat of Tughril. With him the Saljuq line in al-Traq and Kurdistan came to an end. Al-Nasir expected the victorious shah to vacate the conquered territory, but

Takash schemed differently. After the Saljuq fashion he issued coins bearing his name as sultan and proposed to hold the secular power in Baghdad itself, leaving to the caliph only nominal sovereignty. The dispute continued under his energetic son 'Ala'-al-Din Muhammad (1200-1220). Having reduced (1210) the greater part of Persia, subdued Bukhara with its sister Samarqand and seized Ghaznah (1214), this Khwarizm Shah resolved to put an end to the 'Abbasid caliphate. He planned to install in its place an 'Alid one. In his consternation al-Nasir (the defender [of the faith]) is said to have sought in 1216 the aid of a new ally whose star was just rising over the distant east, Chingiz Khan (1155-r<sup>e</sup>. 1227), redoubtable head of pagan Mongolian hordes.<sup>24</sup> Before this appalling swarm of some sixty thousand<sup>25</sup> barbarians, augmented by levies from peoples subjected en route, 'Ala'-al-Din had no recourse but flight. His place of refuge was an island in the Caspian Sea, where he died in despair in 1220.<sup>26</sup>

### Enter Chingiz Khan

In the meantime the Mongols, riding fleet horses and armed with strange bows, were spreading havoc and destruction wherever they went.<sup>27</sup> Before them the cultural centres of eastern Islam were practically wiped out of existence, leaving bare deserts or shapeless ruins where formerly stately palaces and libraries had lifted their heads. A crimson stream marked their trail. Out of a population of 100,000 Harat (Herat) was left with 40,000? The mosques of Bukhara, famed for piety and learning, served as stables for Mongolian horses. Many of the inhabitants of Samarqand and Balkh were either butchered or carried into captivity. Khwarizm was utterly devastated. At the capture of Bukhara (1220) Chingiz (Genghis) is reported by a late tradition to have described himself as "the scourge of God sent to men

as a punishment for their sins".<sup>1</sup> Ibn-al-Athir,<sup>2</sup> a contemporary authority, shudders at the narration of these horrors and wishes his mother had not borne him. Even a century later, when ibn-Battutah<sup>3</sup> visited Bukhara, Samarqand, Balkh and other Transoxianan cities he found them still largely in ruins. As for Baghdad, its turn was soon to come.

Thus did the invincible founder of the largest empire the world has ever seen make his sweep across the realm of Islam. The people he led had by the first half of the thirteenth century shaken every kingdom from China to the Adriatic. Russia was in part overrun and central Europe penetrated as far as eastern Prussia. It was only the death of Chingiz son and successor in 1241 that saved Western Europe from these Mongolian hordes.<sup>4</sup>

The Caliph al-Nasir spent the few remaining years of his long reign, as did his son al-Zahir (1225-6) and grandson al-Mustansir (1226-42), in a state of constant alarm. On one occasion these Mongols, or Tatar as they are called in the contemporary sources, advanced as far as Samarra. This made the terrorstricken population of Baghdad scramble to their defences. But the danger passed for the moment. This was only a lull before the fatal storm.

<sup>1</sup> Juwayni, pt. 1, p. 81.    <sup>2</sup> Vol. xii, p. 233.    <sup>3</sup> Vol. iii, pp. 25-7» 5<sup>2</sup>> 58\*9-

<sup>4</sup> Confused with the Kalmucks, of whose descendants 175>°°  
° were deported to Siberia by the Soviet Union and 600 were found in 1949 in a displaced persons' camp in Western Germany. Of these 250 were permitted two years later to settle on a farm land in New Jersey, where they converted a garage into a Buddhist temple. Cf. below, p. 676, n J.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### THE COLLAPSE OF THE 'ABBÀSID CALIPHATE

If anything parallels the astounding rapidity with which the sons of the Arabian desert conquered in the first Islamic century most of the civilized world, it is the swift decadence of their descendants' domination between the middle of the third and the middle of the fourth centuries. About 820 more extensive authority was concentrated in the hands of one man, the caliph in Baghdad, than in those of any other living person; by 920 the power of his successor had so diminished that it was hardly felt even in his capital city. By 1258 that city itself lay in ruins. With its fall Arab hegemony was lost for ever and the history of the real caliphate closed.

Among the external factors the barbarian (in this case Mongol or Tartar) onslaughts, though spectacular in themselves, were in reality only contributory to the final downfall. Even the rise, mushroom-like, of the numberless dynasties and quasi-dynasties in the heart of the caliphate and on its periphery was in itself a symptom of the disease rather than the cause of it. As in the analogous case of the Roman Empire of the West, the sick man was already on his deathbed when the burglars burst open the doors and snatched their share of the imperial heritage.

More important than the external factors in bringing about the dissolution of the caliphate were the internal ones. The reader who has followed the preceding chapters with care has doubtless already discerned those factors and noticed their operation throughout several centuries. Many of the original conquests were only nominal. The possibility of decentralization and dismemberment always lurked in the nature of those hasty and incomplete conquests. The method of administration was not conducive to stability and

continuity. Exploitation and overtaxation were recognized policies, not the exception but the rule. Lines of cleavage between Arabs and non-Arabs, between Arab Moslems and Neo-Moslems, between Moslems and dhimmis, re-484

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mained sharply marked. Among the Arabians themselves the old divisive feeling between north and south persisted. Neither the Iranian Persians, nor the Turanian Turks, nor the Hamitic Berbers were ever welded into a homogeneous whole with the Semitic Arabs. No consciousness of kind knit these diverse elements closely together. The sons of Iran were ever mindful of their ancient national glory and never reconciled themselves entirely to the new régime. The Berbers vaguely expressed their tribal feeling and sense of difference by their readiness to embrace any schismatic movement. The people of Syria long expected the rise of a Sufyáni to deliver them from the 'Abbasid yoke.<sup>28</sup> Within the fold of religion itself centrifugal forces, no less potent than the political and military, were active, producing Shiites, Qarmatians, Isma'ilites, Assassins and the like. Several of these groupings represented more than religious sects; the Qarmatians staggered the eastern part of the empire with their blows, and soon afterward the Fatimids seized the west. Islam was no more able to unite its devotees into a corporate whole than was the caliphate to incorporate the lands of the Mediterranean with those of Central Asia into a stable unit.

Then there were the social and moral forces of disintegration. The blood of the conquering element became in course of centuries diluted with that of the conquered, with a subsequent loss of their dominating position and qualities. With the decay of the Arab national life, Arab stamina and morale broke down. Gradually the empire developed into an empire of the conquered. The large

harems, made possible by the countless number of eunuchs; the girl and the boy slaves (ghilman)> who contributed most to the degradation of womanhood and the degeneration of manhood; the unlimited concubines and the numberless half-brothers and half-sisters in the imperial household with their unavoidable jealousies and intrigues; the luxurious scale of high living with the emphasis on wine and song all these and other similar forces sapped the vitality of family life and inevitably produced the persistently feeble heirs to the throne. The position of these heirs was rendered still more feeble by their interminable disputes over a right of succession which was never definitely determined.

Nor should the economic factors be ignored or underrated. The imposition of taxes and the government of the provinces for the benefit of the ruling class discouraged farming and industry. As the rulers grew rich the people grew proportionately poor. Within the states grew statelets whose lords habitually fleeced their serfs. The depiction of manpower by the recurring bloody strife left many a cultivated farm desolate. Inundations in lower Mesopotamia periodically wrought havoc, and famines in various parts of the empire added their quota of disaster. The frequent spread of epidemics—plague, smallpox, malaria and other fevers—before which medieval man stood powerless, decimated the population in large areas. No less than forty major epidemics are recorded in the Arabic annals of the first four centuries after the conquest. National economic decay naturally resulted in the curtailment of intellectual development and in the stifling of creative thought.

Hülägu i

Baghdad



In 1253 Hulagu, a grandson of Chingiz Khan, left Mongolia at the head of a huge army intent upon the destruction of the Assassins and the caliphate. The second wave of Mongol hordes was on. It swept before it all those petty princedoms which were striving to grow on the ruins of the empire of the Khwarizm Shahs. Hulagu sent an invitation to the Caliph al-Musta'sim <sup>1</sup> (1242-58) to join in the campaign against the Isma'ili Assassins. The invitation received no response. By 1256 the greater number of the Assassin strongholds, including the "mother convent" Alamut, had been captured without difficulty and the power of that dreaded order crushed to the ground.<sup>29</sup> Even the babes were ruthlessly slaughtered. In September of the following year, as he was winding his way down the famous Khurasan highway, the conquering invader sent an ultimatum to the caliph demanding his surrender and the demolition of the outer city wall. The reply was evasive. In January 1258 the mangonels of Hulagu were in effective operation against the walls of the capital. Soon a

<sup>1</sup> "He who holds fast" to God. The last caliphs:

34. Al-Nasir (1180-1225)

|

35. Al-Zahir (1225-6)

36. Al-Mustansir (1226-42)

|

37. Al-Musta'sim (1242-58)

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breach was effected in one of the towers.<sup>1</sup> The Vizir ibn-al-'Al-qami accompanied by the Nestorian catholicos—Hulagu

had a Christian wife—appeared to ask for terms. But Hulagu refused to receive them. Equally ineffective were warnings citing the fate of others who had dared violate “the city of peace” or undo the 'Abbasid caliphate. Hulagu was told that “if the caliph is killed the whole universe is disorganized, the sun hides its face, rain ceases and plants grow no more”.<sup>2</sup> But he knew better, thanks to the advice of his astrologers. By the tenth of February his hordes had swarmed into the city and the unfortunate caliph with his three hundred <sup>3</sup> officials and qadis rushed to offer an unconditional surrender. Ten days later they were all put to death. The city itself was given over to plunder and flames; the majority of its population, including the family of the caliph, were wiped out of existence. Pestilential odours emitted by corpses strewn unburied in the streets compelled Hulagu to withdraw from the town for a few days. Perhaps he intended to retain Baghdad for his residence and, therefore, the devastation was not as thorough as in other towns. The Nestorian patriarch received special favours. Certain schools and mosques were spared or rebuilt. For the first time in its history the Moslem world was left without a caliph whose name could be cited in the Friday prayers.

In 1260 Hulagu was threatening northern Syria. Here he captured in addition to Aleppo, where he put to the sword some fifty thousand people, Hamah and Harim. After dispatching a general to the siege of Damascus he felt himself constrained by the death of his brother, the Great Khan, to return to Persia.<sup>4</sup> The army left behind, after subjugating Syria, was destroyed in 1260 at 'Ayn Jalut (Goliath's spring) near Nazareth by Baybars, the distinguished general of the Egyptian Mamluk Qutuz. The whole of Syria was now reoccupied by the Mamluks and the westward advance of the Mongols was definitely checked.

<sup>1</sup> Fakhri, p. 454; Rashid-al-Din, vol. i, pp. 284-5. . . . , ,

<sup>2</sup> Fakhri, p. 190; Rashid-al-Din, vol. i, p. 260. Fakhri, written in 1301 and dedicated to Fakhr-al-Din 'Isa, governor of al-Maw\$il under the Mongols, contains eye-witness material on the fall of Baghdad.

<sup>3</sup> Three thousand in Rashid-al-Din, vol. i, p. 298.

\* The Great Khan of Marco Polo was another brother, Qubilay (J 1294), the Kubla Khan of Coleridge. It was Qubilay who transferred the capital from Qara-qorum in Mongolia to Peking. Consult Rashid-al-Din, vol. i, p. 128, vol. ii, ed. E. Blochet (Leyden, 1911), pp. 350 .

<sup>5</sup> Abu-al-Fida', vol. iii, pp. 209-14; Rashid-al-Din, vol. 1, pp. 326-49; Maqnzi, SulUk, tr. Quatremere as Sultans mamlouks, vol. i (pt. 2), pp. 96 seq.

Later, Hulagu returned and attempted to make an alliance with the Franks for the conquest of Syria but he failed in his purpose.

As founder of the Mongol kingdom of Persia, which extended from the Amu Darya to the borders of Syria and from the Caucasus Mountains to the Indian Ocean, Hulagu was the first to assume the title Il-Khan.<sup>30</sup> This title was borne by his successors down to the seventh, Ghazan Mahmud (1295-1304), under whom Islam, with Shi'ite proclivities, became the state religion. Under the Il-Khans or Hulaguids Baghdad was reduced to the position of capital of the province called al-Traq al-'Arabi. The great Il-Khan, as Hulagu was often entitled, favoured the Christian element among his subjects. In times of peace he delighted to make his home at

Maraghah, east of the salt Lake Urmiah, where many edifices, including the famous library and observatory, were built by him. There Hulagu died in 1265 and with him were buried, in accordance with Mongol custom, beautiful young maidens. He and his successors, like the Saljuqs before them, were quick to appreciate and utilize the administrative genius of the Persians and to surround themselves with such cultivated savants as al-Juwayni (f 1283) and Rashid-al-Din (the historians of the period. The seventy-five years of

Il-Khanid rule in Persia were rich in literary achievement.

Hard pressed between the mounted archers of the wild Mongols in the east and the mailed knights of the Crusaders on the west, Islam in the early part of the thirteenth century seemed for ever lost. How different was the situation in the last part of the same century! The last Crusader had by that time been driven into the sea. The seventh of the Il-Khans, many of whom had been flirting with Christianity, had finally recognized Islam as the state religion—a dazzling victory for the faith of Muhammad. Just as in the case of the Saljuqs, the religion of the Moslems had conquered where their arms had failed. Less than half a century after Hulagu's merciless attempt at the destruction of Islamic culture, his great-grandson Ghazan, as a devout Moslem, was consecrating much time and energy to the revivification of that same culture.

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It was not the Mongols, however, who were destined to restore Lastcham-the military glory of Islam and unfurl its banner triumphantly over new and vast territories. This was left to their kinsmen, the Ottoman Turks,<sup>1</sup> the last champions of the religion of Arabia. Their empire under

Sulayman (1520-66) stretched from Baghdad on the Tigris to Budapest on the Danube, and from Aswan, near the first cataract of the Nile, almost to the Strait of Gibraltar. When in January 1516 Sulayman's father, Salim, destroyed the Mamluk army in North Syria,<sup>2</sup> he took among his prisoners a nonentity who under the name al-Mutawakkil represented a line of nominal 'Abbasid caliphs who for about two and a half centuries had been maintained there as puppets of the Mamluk sultans. The line was begun in 1261 by an uncle of al-Musta'sim, who had evidently escaped the massacre at Baghdad and was installed in Cairo by the fourth Mamluk ruler, Baybars (1260-1277), with great pomp as caliph under the name al-Mustansir.<sup>3</sup> Al-Mustansir was soon after killed in a rash attempt on behalf of Baybars to recover Baghdad. He was followed by another scion of the 'Abbasid house, who in 1262 was installed with similar ceremony. Sultan Salim carried the Caliph al-Mutawakkil with him to Constantinople but allowed him to return to Cairo, where he died in 1543. With him the shadowy 'Abbasid caliphate of Egypt may be said to have ended. There is nothing in the contemporary sources to support the claim, often advanced, that the last 'Abbasid surrendered his title of caliph with all rights and privileges pertaining thereto to the Ottoman conqueror or to his successor in Constantinople.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> So called after their eponymous founder, 'Uthman, born ca, 1258.

<sup>2</sup> See below, pp. 677, 705.

<sup>8</sup> Abu-al-Fida', vol. iii, p. 222. See below, p. 676.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 186; below, p. 705.

#### PART IV

## THE ARABS IN EUROPE:

### SPAIN AND SICILY

#### CHAPTER XXXIV

#### CONQUEST OF SPAIN

The Moslem campaign in the Iberian Peninsula, the south-Gothic western gate of Europe, was, as noted before, the last and most dramatic of the major military operations undertaken by the Arabs. It marked the height of the African-European expansion of the Moslems, just as the conquest of Turkestan marked the apogee of the Asiatic-Egyptian expansion.

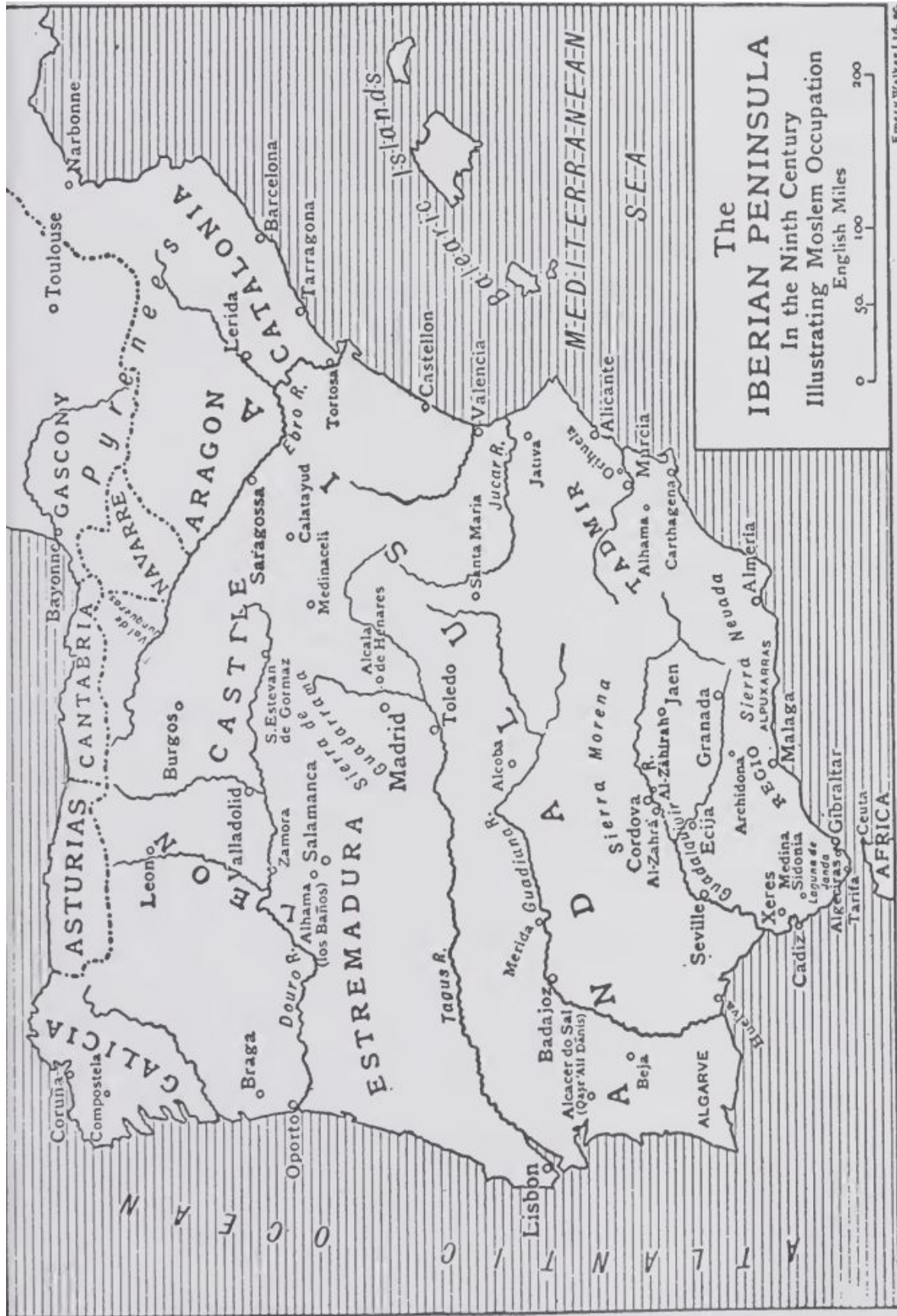
In its swiftness of execution and completeness of success this expedition into Spain holds a unique place in medieval military annals. The first reconnaissance was made in July 710, when, with four hundred foot and one hundred horse, all Berbers, Tarif,<sup>31</sup> a client of Músa ibn-Nusayr, the celebrated governor of North Africa under the Umayyads, landed on the tiny peninsula which is almost the southernmost tip of the European continent. This peninsula, now Tarifa, has since borne his name, Jazirat (isle of) Tarif.<sup>32</sup> Músa, who had held the governorship since about 700, had driven the Byzantines for ever from the territory west of Carthage and had gradually pushed his conquests to the Atlantic, thus acquiring for Islam a point d'appui for the invasion of Europe. Encouraged by Tarif's success and by the dynastic trouble in the Visigothic kingdom of Spain and actuated more by the desire for booty than for conquest, Músa dispatched in 711 his Berber freedman Tariq ibn-Ziyad into Spain with 7000 men, most of whom were Berbers. Tariq landed near the mighty rock which has since immortalized his name, Jabal (mount of) Tariq (Gibraltar).<sup>33</sup>

The ships, so the tradition states, were provided by a certain semi-legendary

Julian,<sup>[34](#)</sup> count of Ceuta,<sup>[35](#)</sup> where the strait is only thirteen miles wide.

With his forces supplemented, Tar'q, at the head of 12,000 men, was met on July 19, 711, by the armies of King Roderick at the mouth of the Barbate River<sup>[36](#)</sup> on the shore of the lagoon of the Janda.<sup>[37](#)</sup> Roderick had deposed his predecessor, the son of Witiza, and usurped the throne.<sup>[38](#)</sup> Though numbering 25,000 men the Visigothic army was utterly routed owing to the treachery of the king's political enemies, headed by Bishop Oppas, a brother of Witiza. What became of Roderick himself remains a mystery. The usual version in both Spanish and Arabic chronicles is that he simply disappeared.

After this decisive victory the march of the Moslems through Spain almost amounted to a promenade. Only towns dominated by Visigothic knighthood offered effective resistance. Tariq, with the bulk of the army, headed by way of Ecija towards Toledo, the capital, sending detachments against neighbouring towns. The strongly fortified Seville in the south was avoided. One column seized Archidona, which struck no blow. Another captured Elvira, which stood close to the spot where Granada now stands and proved an easy prey. A third, consisting of cavalry under Mughlth al-Rúmi (the Roman, Greek), attacked Cordova. After holding out for two months this future capital of the Moslems was delivered to the besiegers through the treachery of a shepherd, we are told, who pointed out a breach in the wall.<sup>[39](#)</sup>





Musa crosses the strait

A

triumphal procession

Malaga offered no resistance. At Ecija the fiercest battle of the campaign was fought, ending favourably for the invaders. Toledo, the Visigoths' capital, was betrayed by certain Jewish residents. Thus did Tariq, who in the spring of 711 had started as leader of a raid, become by the end of the summer the master of half of Spain. He had destroyed a whole kingdom.

Jealous of the unexpected and phenomenal success of his lieutenant, Músa, with 10,000<sup>1</sup> troops, all Arabians and Syrian Arabs, rushed to Spain in June 712. For his objective he chose those towns and strongholds avoided by Tariq, e.g. Medina Sidonia and Carmona. Seville, the largest city and the intellectual centre of Spain and once its Roman capital, held out under siege until the end of June 713. But the most obstinate resistance was met at Merida. After a year's beleaguering, however, this city was taken by storm on June 1, 713.<sup>2</sup>

It was in or near Toledo that Músa met Tariq. Here, we are told, he whipped his subordinate and put him in chains for refusing to obey orders to halt in the early stage of the campaign.<sup>3</sup> But the conquest went on. Soon Saragossa (Cæsarea Augusta, Cæsaraugusta) in the north was reached and the Moslem troops advanced into the highlands of Aragon, Leon, the Asturias and Galicia. In the autumn of the same year the Caliph al-Walid in distant Damascus recalled Músa, charging him with the same offence for which Músa had disciplined his Berber subordinate—acting

independently of his superior. As governor of Ifrīqiyah, Mūsā had none but the caliph for his superior

Leaving his second son, <sup>e</sup>Abd-al-<sup>e</sup>Aziz, in command of the newly acquired territory, Mūsā slowly made his way overland toward Syria. On his march he was accompanied by his officers, four hundred Visigothic princes, wearing crowns and girdled with gold belts, and followed by an endless retinue of slaves and prisoners of war loaded with enormous treasures of booty.<sup>4</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Tabari, vol. ii, p. 1253'. Other sources make the number 18,000.

' Ibn-Tdhâri, vol. ii, pp. 15-16; ibn-al-Athir, vol. iv, p. 447; Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 170-71. Cf. ibn-al-Qûtîyah, *Tarikh Iftitâh al-Andalus* (Madrid, 1868), pp. 9-10; tr. Julián Ribera as *Historia de la conquista de España* (Madrid, 1926), pp. 6-7; tr. O. Houdas as "Histoire de la conquête de l'Andalousie" in *Recueil de textes et de traductions, etc.* (Paris, 1859), vol. i, p. 226.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, p. 210; ibn-Tdhari, vol. ii, pp. 17-18.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Tdhari, vol. ii, pp. 21-2; ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, pp. 210-11; ibn-al-Qûtîyah, p. 10; pseudo-ibn-Qutaybah, *Qissat Fath al-Andalus* (taken from *al-Imamah w-al-Siyasah* and issued as supplement to ibn-al-Qûtîyah), pp. 138, 140 seq. See above, p. 235.

triumphal passage of this princely train through northern Africa from west to east forms a favourite theme with Arab historians. Its description brings to mind the picture of the ancient victorious marches of Roman generals. The news of the impressive procession travelled to Damascus faster than

the procession itself. On reaching Tiberias Músa found orders awaiting him from Sulaymán, brother and heir of the sick al-Walid, to delay his advent to the capital. The caliph-to-be hoped thereby to have the arrival grace his accession to the throne.<sup>1</sup>

In February 715 Músa entered Damascus with his Visigothic princes bedecked in their jewellery and was evidently received with favour by al-Walid. The official reception, held with great dignity and pomp in the courtyard of the magnificent Umayyad Mosque, is one of the high-water marks in the history of triumphant Islam. For the first time hundreds of Western royalty and thousands of European captives were seen offering homage to the commander of the believers. Músa presented the caliph, among other trophies, with the superb table (ma tdaji) whose workmanship legend assigns to genii in the service of King Solomon. From Jerusalem this unique piece of art, legend asserts, was carried away by the Romans into their capital, whence it was later taken by the Goths. Each Gothic king vied with the preceding one in decorating this table with precious stones. The treasure was kept in the cathedral at Toledo and was captured by Tariq, probably from the bishop who was fleeing with it from the capital. Tariq, so the story goes, had secreted one of its legs when Músa seized the table from him in Toledo, and now in the presence of the caliph dramatically produced the missing part as proof of his own exploit.<sup>2</sup>

The same fate which befell many another successful Arab Músa fails general awaited Musa. Al-Walid's successor subjected him to <sup>grace</sup> abject humiliation. Besides disciplining him by making him stand until exhausted in the sun, he confiscated his property and deprived him of all authority. The last we hear of the aged con-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 'Abd-al-Wáhid al-Marrákushi, *al-Mujib ft Talkhi? Akhbár al-Maghrib*,

2nd ed., R. Dozy (Leyden, 1881), p. 8; tr. E. Fagnan as *Histoire des Almohades* (Algiers, 1893), p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-Khallikán, vol. iii, pp. 26-7; ibn-al-Athir, vol. iv, pp. 44«-9j Maqqan, vol. i, pp. 167, 172; ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, p. 211; *Nabdhah min Akhbár Fathi al-Andalus* (ext. al-Risálah al-Sharifiyah ila al-Aqtár al-AndaluF.yah and published as a supplement to ibn-al-Qütíyah, Madrid, 1868), pp. 193, 213. 3ee *Arabian Nights*, no. 272.

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queror of Africa and Spain is as a beggar in a remote village of al-Hijaz, Wadi al-Oura.<sup>40</sup>

The conquest explained

Spain was now a province of the caliphate. The Arabic name it assumed was al-Andalus.<sup>41</sup> Musa's immediate successors had only small territories in the north and east of the peninsula to conquer and comparatively few revolts to quell. Within the short space of seven years the conquest of the peninsula, one of the fairest and largest provinces of medieval Europe, was effected. The conquerors were there to stay—for centuries at least.

The reasons for this seemingly unprecedented triumph are not hard to discern even from the above sketchy account. In the first place, the line of national cleavage between the Visigoths (West Goths) who entered Spain in the early part of the fifth century as Teutonic barbarians and the Spanish-Roman population was not yet entirely obliterated. The

Goths had to struggle for a long time to displace their predecessors, the Suevi and Vandals, who were likewise invading Germanic hordes. The Visigoths ruled as absolute, often despotic, monarchs. They clung to the Arian form of Christianity until one of them, Recared, in 587 accepted Catholicism, the religion of the natives. As Catholics the people had hated the rule of the heretical Goths. The natives included a considerable class of serfs and slaves, who were naturally dissatisfied with their hard lot. That this enslaved class should have contributed its share to the success of the invasion and cooperated with the invaders is not surprising. Then there was the Jewish element in the population which was estranged from the bulk of the nation through active persecution by the Gothic royalty. Attempts at their forced conversion were consummated by a royal decree issued in 612 enjoining all Jews to be baptized under penalty of banishment and confiscation of property. That explains why several of the conquered towns were left in charge of Jew's as the Moslem invaders marched through Spain.

We should, moreover, remember that political disagreements among the royalty and nobility of the Goths themselves, coupled with internal strife, had undermined the state. Toward the end of the sixth century the Gothic nobles had grown into territorial lords. The Moslem invasion coincided with the accession to the

throne of a usurper from among the nobility who was readily betrayed by the kinsmen of his deposed predecessor. On the conquest of Toledo, Achila, the deposed son of Witiza, who had naively cherished the notion that the Arabs were fighting his battle for him, contented himself with the recovery of his estates in Toledo. Here he continued to live in

great pomp. His uncle, Bishop Oppas, was installed over the metropolitan see of the capital. As for Julian, the part he played in the conquest was greatly exaggerated.

The fall of Saragossa removed one of the last barriers between Beyond Spain and France. But there remained the Pyrenees. Musa <sup>pyrcnecs</sup> never crossed them, though certain Arab chroniclers credit him with the feat and with having even entertained the hope of traversing “the land of the Franks and joining hands through Constantinople with the caliph in Damascus.”<sup>1</sup> Though wild and fantastic, the dream of fighting their way through Europe may have flashed through the brains of the Arab invaders, whose knowledge of the geography of Europe could not have been great. In reality it was Musa’s third successor, al-Hurr ibn-‘Abd-al-Rahman al-Thaqafi,<sup>2</sup> who, in 717 or 718, was the first to cross the range.

Lured by the rich treasures of the convents and churches of France and encouraged by the internal dissension between the chief officers of the Merovingian court and the dukes of Aquitaine (L. Aquitania), al-Hurr started the raids which were continued by his successor al-Samh ibn-Malik al-Khawlam. In 720, under the Caliph ‘Umar II, al-Samh seized Septimania, which was a dependency of the defunct Visigothic kingdom, and captured Narbonne (Ar. Arbunah), which was converted later into a huge citadel with an arsenal and depots for provisions and arms. But his attempt in the following year at Toulouse, the seat of Duke Eudes of Aquitaine, resulted in failure, thanks to the effective resistance offered. Here al-Samh “suffered martyrdom”,<sup>3</sup> i.e. fell in battle against non-Moslems. The first great victory by a Germanic prince over Moslems had been won. The subsequent movements of the Arabs beyond the Pyrenees were not successful.

<sup>1</sup> Maqqari, vol. i, p. 1751 ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, pp. 117-18.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, pp. 24-5; ibn-al-Athir. vol. v, p. 373

<sup>3</sup> Al-Dabbi, Bughyat al-Multamis fi Ta'rikh Rijal al-Andalus, ed. Francisco Codera and Julian Ribera (Madrid, 1884-5) > P- 3<sup>3</sup>-

### The battle of Tours

The last and greatest expedition northward was led by Abd-al-Rahman ibn-\*Abdullah al-Ghafiqi, successor of al-Samh as amir over Spain. \*Abd-al-Rahman advanced through the western Pyrenees, which he crossed in the early spring of 732. Having vanquished Duke Eudes on the banks of the Garonne, he stormed Bordeaux, setting its churches on fire. After burning a basilica outside the walls of Poitiers he pushed northward to the vicinity of Tours. As the resting-place of the body of St. Martin, the apostle of the Gauls, Tours was a sort of religious capital for Gaul. Its votive offerings undoubtedly presented the chief attraction to the invaders.<sup>1</sup>

Here, between Tours and Poitiers, at the junction of the Clain and the Vienne, \*Abd-al-Rahman was met by Charles Martel, mayor of the palace at the Merovingian court, whose aid Eudes had besought. Charles, as the surname Martel (the hammer) which he later won signifies, was valiant and bold. He had subdued many enemies and obliged Eudes, who exercised independent authority in Aquitaine, to acknowledge the nominal sovereignty of the northern Franks. Though not king in name Charles, an illegitimate son of Pepin of Heristal, was king in fact.

For seven days the Arab army under \*Abd-al-Rahman and the Frankish forces under Charles, mostly foot soldiers clad in wolfskins and wearing long matted hair hanging down over their shoulders, stood facing one another anxiously awaiting the moment of joining battle. Light skirmishes dragged on. At last, on an October Saturday of 732, the Arab leader took the initiative in the attack. The Frankish warriors, who in the heat of the fight had formed a hollow square, stood shoulder to shoulder, firm as a wall, inflexible as a block of ice—in the words of a Western historian.<sup>2</sup> The light cavalry of the enemy failed against them. Without giving way they hewed down with their swords all attackers. Among the victims was \*Abd-al-Rahmán himself. Darkness at last separated the combatants. At the dawn of day the stillness of the hostile camp caused Charles to suspect a ruse. Spies were sent out to ascertain the facts. Under cover of night the Arabs had quietly deserted their tents and vanished. Charles thus came off victorious.

<sup>1</sup> See Dabbi, Bughyah, p. 353.

<sup>2</sup> André Duchesne, *Historiée Francorum scriptores*, vol. i (Paris, 1636), p. 786.

Later legends embellished this day of Poitiers or Tours, greatly exaggerating its historic importance. To the Moslems, who, however, have very little to say about it, it has become a *balat al-shuhada* / pavement of martyrs. To the Christians it meant the turning-point in the military fortunes of their eternal foe. Gibbon,<sup>2</sup> and after him other historians, would see in Paris and London mosques, where cathedrals now stand, and would hear the Koran instead of the Bible expounded in Oxford and other seats of learning, had the Arabs won the day. To several modern historical writers this battle of Tours is one of the decisive battles in history.<sup>3</sup> In reality it decided nothing. The Arab-Berber wave,



already almost a thousand miles from its starting-place in Gibraltar, had reached a natural standstill. It had lost its momentum and spent itself. Internal discord and jealousy between its two component racial elements were beginning to tell on the morale of 'Abd-al-Rahman's army. Among the Arabs themselves, as we shall immediately see, there was no unanimity of feeling and purpose. It is true that the Moslems were checked at this point, but their raids continued elsewhere. In 734, for instance, they seized Avignon; nine years later they pillaged Lyons; and not until 759 did they relinquish their hold on Narbonne, the strategic base of their operations. But although this defeat near Tours was not the actual cause of the Arab halt, it does mark the farthest limit of the victorious Moslem arms. One hundred years after the death of the Prophet the domain of his successor in Damascus had become a worldempire extending from China to Gaul.<sup>4</sup>

The strife between the two factions in the Moslem ranks of Cmi Spain affords the key to the history of the period between the <sup>war's</sup> battle of Tours in 732 and the heroic advent of the Umayyad 'Abd-al-Rahman I in 755. It was the same old feud between

<sup>1</sup> Akhbdr, p. 25; Maqqari, vol. i, p. 146,1. 3. Balat is a loan-word through Syriac from Latin or Greek platea or palatium. The word is common in place-names, especially in Spain (Idrisi, pp. 32, 59). In this instance the field was referred to as "pavement" because the battle was fought on a paved Roman road. Cf. John 'Decline and Fall, ed. Bury, vol. vi, pp. 15 ^q. See also Lane-Poole, pp. ^Edward Creasy, The Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World, new ed. (New York. 1918), pp. 159 S. P. Scott, History of the Moorish Empire in Europe (Philadelphia, 1904), vol. i, p. 306. Cf. Henry Coppce, History of the Conquest of Spain by the Arab-Moors (Boston, 1881), vol. ii, pp. 19 "f-

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 21c.

North Arabians, frequently referred to as Mudarites,<sup>1</sup> and South Arabians or Yamanites. The Yamanites everywhere were inoculated with Shi'ite ideas- the Mudarites maintained Sunni orthodoxy. At the establishment of the 'Abbâsid dynasty the Yamanites, as 'Alids, naturally sympathized with the new regime; the others remained loyal to the fallen house of banu-Umayyah. The Berbers, who after the Spanish conquest flooded the peninsula from Africa, where many of them had embraced the Khâri-jite doctrine and espoused its cause against both Umayyads and 'Alids, now constituted a most disturbing factor. They complained that their nationals carried the brunt of the fighting but were nevertheless allotted the arid central plateau, whereas the Arabs appropriated for themselves the most smiling provinces of Andalusia.

Discontent soon led to open revolt. The flame of Berber insurrection which had raged for years (734-42) from Morocco to al-Qayrawan now spread to Spain and threatened the handful of Arab colonists with extermination. In 741 the Caliph Hishâm dispatched an army of twenty-seven thousand Syrians to quell the African revolt.<sup>2</sup> The remnant of this army, about one-third of it, crossed the strait under the leadership of Balj ibn-Bishr al-Qushayri. The Syrians turned colonists and, with their ambitions and interests marked by unswerving loyalty to the Umayyad cause, introduced a new problem into an already complicated situation. Balj seized the government and established his men in the capital, Cordova. After that the turbulent Syrians were dispersed. The division of Hirns was settled in Seville; that of Palestine in Medina Sidonia and Algeciras; that of Damascus in the district of Elvira; and that of Qinnasrîn in the district of Jaen.<sup>3</sup> As an index of the prevailing anarchy in this period suffice it to note that in the short interval between

732 and 755 no less than twenty-three governors succeeded one another in Spain. Under such 'conditions not much progress could be made into the land of the enemy in the north, though several campaigns

<sup>1</sup> The Mudar and Rabi'ah, both of North Arab origin, were often included under the collective term Ma'add. See above, p. 280.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbâr, p. 31. Cf. ibn-al-Qutiyah, pp. 14-15; ibn-'Idhari, vol. i, pp. 41-2, vol. ii, p. 30; Marrâkushi, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-al-Qütiyah, p. 20; ibn-'Idhâri, vol. ii, p. 33; ibn-Khaldûn, vol. iv, p. 119; ibn-al-Athir. vol. v. pp. 204-5; ibn-al-Khatib. MS. in R. Dozy, Recherches sur l'histoire et la littérature de l'Espagne, 3rd ed. (Paris, 1881), vol. i, app. ii, pp. vii-viii.

were conducted in the course of which certain governors "suffered martyrdom".<sup>1</sup>

The government of the peninsula was in the hands of an amir The who ruled almost independently, though nominally under the <sup>amirate</sup> governor-general of al-Maghrib (i.e. North Africa and Spain) residing in al-Qayrawan. In certain instances the amir received his appointment from, and held it directly under, the caliph in Damascus. 'Abd-al-'Aziz, son of Musa ibn-Nusayr and first amir of al-Andalus, chose Seville (Ishbiliyah) for his seat of government. He married the widow of King Roderick, Egilona, whose name now became umm- (mother of) 'Asim. This new Christian wife, according to Arab chroniclers,<sup>2</sup> persuaded her husband to wear a crown, after the usage of Visigothic royalty, and to make the entrance into his audience chamber so low that none could get in without bending in obeisance. She also insisted on having such a low door to her palace chapel

that Abd-al- Aziz himself had to bend on entering as if in an act of worship. Rumours centring on these innovations, exaggerated to the point of making of the Moslem amir a convert to Christianity, reached the Caliph Sulayman and resulted in the murder of the first governor of Nioslem Spain. The tragic event took place near Seville in 716 at the monastery of Santa Rufina, presumably used then as a mosque. The head was dispatched to Damascus, where it was exhibited to Abd-al- Aziz aged and distressed

father.

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Three years afterward al-Samh ibn-Malik al-Khawlani, the fourth in this list of ephemeral amirs, transferred the seat of government to Cordova<sup>3</sup> (Qurtubah), destined to become for centuries the brilliant residence of the Western Umayyad dynasty. It was al-Samh who rebuilt the bridge in Cordova over the Guadalquivir<sup>4</sup> on the remains of an older Roman structure, made a fresh survey of the land and instituted a new system of taxation. Shortly after al-Samh the governorship became a bone of bloody contention between the Mudarites and Yamanites. The two parties finally hit upon what they considered a brilliant

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, pp. 118-19; Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 145<sup>6</sup>-

' Akhbdr, p. 20; ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, p. 212; ibn-al-Qaliyah, p. 11; ibn-al-Athir, vol. v, p. 14; ibn-Tdhari, vol. ii, pp. 22-3; Maqqari, vol. 1, p. 178. Cf. pseudo-'<sup>bl</sup>3 MzbMat,'pp. 206-7/ibn-al-Qufiyah, pp. 12-13. Cf. ibn-'Idhan, vol. 11, p. 25; Maqqari, vol. i, p. 19°-

<sup>4</sup> From Ar. al-Wadi al-Kabir. the big valley.

504 THE ARABS IN EUROPE: SPAIN AND SICILY PART IV idea: choosing alternately one of their number each year to

rule the land.

The first choice of the Mudarites was Yusuf ibn-'Abd-al-Rahman al-Fihri,<sup>1</sup> a descendant of 'Uqbah, the founder of al-Qayrawan. The Caliph Marwan II confirmed (74<sup>^</sup>) the <sup>a</sup>P" pointment.<sup>2</sup> At the end of the year, however, Yusuf refused to give turn to the Yamanite candidate and continued to rule for about ten years.<sup>3</sup> Toward the close of 755, <sup>as</sup> he was in the north busy subduing a revolt, word was received that an Umayyad youth by the name of 'Abd-al-Rahman ibn-Mu'awiyah had lately landed on the coast south of Granada and was on his way to capture the amirate. A new and important chapter in the history of Spain was being ushered in.

<sup>1</sup> Akhbdr, pp. 57 seq.\ ibn-al-Athir, vol. v, pp. 286-7.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. pseudo-ibn-Qutaybah, p. 188.

' Ibn-al-Abbar, al-Hullah al-Siyar' (Notices sur quelques manuscrus a<sup>^</sup>aoes), ea. Dozy (Leyden, 1847-51), P- 54: ibn-al-Athir, vol. v, p. 376.

## CHAPTER XXXV

### THE UMAYYAD AMIRATE IN SPAIN

WHEN in 750 the 'Abbasids signalized their accession by a A general massacre of the members of the house of Umayyah,<sup>42</sup> one of the very few who escaped was \*Abd-al-Rahman ibn-Mu'awiyah,<sup>43</sup> a grandson of Hisham, the tenth caliph of Damascus. The story of the narrow escape of this twenty-year-old youth and of his five years' wandering in disguise through Palestine, Egypt and North Africa, where more than once he barely escaped the vigilant eyes of 'Abbasid spies, forms one of the most dramatic episodes in

Arabic annals. The flight began from a Bedouin camp on the left bank of the Euphrates where 'Abd-al-Rahman had sought refuge. One day the black standards of the 'Abbasids suddenly appeared close by the camp. With his thirteen-year-old brother, \*Abd-al-Rahman dashed into the river. The younger, evidently a poor swimmer, believed the pursuers' promise of amnesty and returned from midstream, only to be slain; the elder kept on and gained the opposite bank.<sup>[44](#)</sup>

As he trudged on his way southward \*Abd-al-Rahman was joined in Palestine by his faithful and able freedman Badr. In North Africa he barely escaped assassination at the hands of its governor, a relative of Yusuf al-Fihri. Wandering from tribe to tribe and from town to town, friendless and penniless, the proscribed fugitive finally reached Ceuta (755). His maternal uncles were Berbers from that neighbourhood and offered him refuge. Thence he sent Badr across the strait to negotiate with the Syrian divisions from Damascus and Qinnasrin which were settled in Elvira and Jaen. Many of the leaders, who were former proteges of the Umayyad house, welcomed the opportunity to rally under the leadership of one who bore a name with which all Syrians conjured. The Syrians won the Yamanites over to their cause,

Cordova captured

Moslem

Spain consolidated and pacified

not so much because the latter loved \*Abd-al-Rahman as because they hated their titular governor, Yusuf. A ship was sent to transport the new leader. Tall and lean, with sharp, aquiline features and thin red hair,<sup>[45](#)</sup> this scion of the banu-

Umayyah, imbued with the spirit of adventure and trained in the best tradition of the house, soon became master of the complicated situation. In vain did the weak-kneed Yusuf try to satisfy the new pretender with rich gifts and promises, including his daughter's hand. One southern city after another opened its gates without resistance. Archidona,<sup>46</sup> where the Jordan division had established itself, the province of Sidona, in which the Palestine division had settled, and Seville, where dwelt the Arabs of Hirns, welcomed the prince with open arms.<sup>47</sup>

As \*Abd-al-Rahman with his partisans pushed on toward Cordova, Yusuf advanced in the direction of Seville. Before the impending battle it was noticed that the prince had no military standard of his own, whereupon the Yamanite chieftain of Seville, abu-al-Sabbah al-Yahsubi, improvised a banner by fastening a green turban round the head of a spear.<sup>48</sup> Thus originated, we are told, the standard of the Umayyads in Spain.

The morning of May 14, 756, found the two opposing armies engaged in battle on the banks of the Guadalquivir. Though most of the men on both sides were on horses, which were still scarce in Andalusia, \*Abd-al-Rahman, realizing that some of his followers were afraid he might desert, insisted on changing his mount for an old mule belonging to abu-al-Sabbah.<sup>49</sup> The issue of the combat was not long in doubt. Yusuf with his chief general sought safety in flight. Cordova was captured and a general amnesty was declared. \*Abd-al-Rahman had no little difficulty in stopping the pillage of the capital and in putting the harem of the defeated governor under his magnanimous protection.

The mastery of Cordova, however, did not necessarily mean the mastery of Moslem Spain. The fugitive governor continued to foment trouble in the north until he was finally

slain near Toledo.<sup>1</sup> This city was not reduced till 764. Yamanite and Shi'ite revolts, fostered by 'Abbasid agents, were successive. Berber insurrections took ten years to suppress. The Berbers never forgave their Arab superiors for appropriating to themselves the lion's share of the conquered land. Former staunch supporters of the new amir now turned enemies and had to be summarily dealt with. The Sevillian sheikh whose banner and mule had led 'Abd-al-Rahman to victory lost his head in an uprising. Badr, 'Abd-al-Rahman's right-hand man, was banished to a frontier town after losing all his property

Enemies within had their confederates without. In 761 the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Mansur had the temerity to appoint one al-'Ala' ibn-Mughith as governor over Spain. Two years later al-'Ala' was decapitated and his head, preserved in salt and camphor and wrapped in a black flag and the diploma of appointment, was forwarded to al-Mansur while on a pilgrimage to Makkah.<sup>2</sup> Al-Mansur, who on another occasion called 'Abd-al-Rahman "the falcon of Quraysh",<sup>3</sup> now exclaimed, "Thanks be to Allah for having placed the sea between us and such a foe!"<sup>4</sup> 'Abd-al-Rahman is said even to have equipped a fleet to wrest Syria from 'Abbasid hands but was forced by domestic problems to stay at home.

In 777 a formidable confederacy of Arab chiefs in the north-A match east headed by the governor of Barcelona and a blue-eyed son- <sup>Charle</sup>. in-law of Yusuf al-Fihri invited Charlemagne, who might have <sup>ma</sup>s<sup>ne</sup> been considered an ally of the 'Abbasid caliph<sup>5</sup> and therefore a natural enemy of 'Abd-al-Rahman, to an alliance against the new amir of Spain. Charlemagne advanced (778) through the north-eastern Spanish marches as far as Saragossa,<sup>6</sup> but had to withdraw when that city closed its gates in his face and domestic enemies threatened his authority at home. On



its “dolorous route” of retreat through the defiles of the Pyrenees, the Frankish army was attacked in its rear by Basques and other mountaineers from whom it suffered disastrous loss in men and baggage.<sup>7</sup> Among the leaders who fell was Roland, whose heroic

Ibn-al-Abbâr, Hullah, p. 55.  
33.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-al-Qupyah, p.

Ibn-‘Idhâri, voi. ii, p. 61; Maqqari, vol. i, p. 213. Ibn-al-Qütiyah, pp. 33-4; Maqqari, vol. i, p. 215.

É. Lévi-Provençal, Histoire de l’Espagne musulmane, vol. 1 (Paris, 1950), p. 121. - Akhbâr, p. 113.

’ Éginhard, Charlemagne, ed. and tr. Halphen, pp. 29-31; Ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, pp. 123-4; Ibn-al-Atîr, vol. vi, pp. 7-8.

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defence has been immortalized in the Chanson de Roland, not only a gem of early French literature but one of the most striking epics of medieval times. In effect, ‘Abd-al-Rahman proved himself the equal of the mightiest sovereign in the West as he had proved himself the equal of the greatest ruler in the East.<sup>1</sup>

An independent amirate

In the process of subduing his multitudinous adversaries 'Abd-al-Rahman developed a well-disciplined, highly trained army of 40,000 or more mercenary Berbers, imported from Africa, on whose loyalty he could now depend for the maintenance of his throne. The favour of such a body he knew how to keep by generous pay. In 757 he discontinued the khutbah hitherto delivered in the name of the 'Abbasid caliph, but did not assume the caliphal title himself. He and his successors down to 'Abd-al-Rahman III contented themselves with the title of amir, though ruling independently. Under 'Abd-al-Rahman I Spain had thus been the first province to shake off the authority of the recognized caliph in Islam.

With his realm consolidated and temporarily pacified, 'Abd-al-Rahman turned to the arts of peace, in which he showed himself as great as in the art of war. He beautified the cities of his domain, built an aqueduct for the supply of pure water to the capital, initiated the construction of a wall round it and erected for himself the Munyat<sup>2</sup> al-Rusafah outside Cordova in imitation of the palace built by his ancestor Hisham in northeastern Syria. To his villa he brought water and introduced exotic plants, such as peaches and pomegranates. To a lonely palm tree in his garden, said to be the first imported from Syria, he addressed some tender verses of his own composition.<sup>3</sup>

Two years before his death in 788 'Abd-al-Rahman rebuilt the great Mosque of Cordova<sup>4</sup> as a rival to the two sanctuaries of Islam in Jerusalem and Makkah. Completed and enlarged by his successors, the Mosque of Cordova soon became the Ka'bah of Western Islam. With its forest of stately columns and its spacious outer court this monumental structure, transformed into <sup>1</sup> Consult Coppee, vol. ii, pp. 167-8.

<sup>3</sup> A loan-word from Gr. (also Coptic) meaning “garden”.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-al-Abbar, *Hullah*, p. 34; ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi, p. 77; Maqqari, vol. ii, p. 37; Nicholson, *Literary History*, p. 418. The first date-palms were introduced by the Phoenicians. The Arabs brought in new varieties which they propagated from offshoots, whereas the earlier culture was based entirely on growing dates from seed.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-’Idhari, vol. ii, p. 60, cf. p. 245; Maqqari, vol. i, p. 212.

a Christian cathedral at the reconquest by Ferdinand III in 1236, has survived to the present day under the popular name “La Mezquita” (the mosque). Besides the great mosque the capital could already boast a bridge, over the Guadalquivir, later enlarged to seventeen arches. Nor were the interests of the founder of the Umayyad régime limited to the material welfare of his people. In various ways he diligently strove to fashion into a national mould Arabians, Syrians, Berbers, Numidians, Hispano-Arabs and Goths — a rather hopeless task; and in more than one sense did he initiate that intellectual movement which made Islamic Spain from the ninth to the eleventh centuries one of the two centres of world culture.

The dynasty established by ‘Abd-al-Rahmán I, styled al-Dákhil (the newcomer) by Arab chroniclers, was to endure for two and three-quarter centuries (756-1031). It reached its height under the eighth amir, ‘Abd-al-Rahman III (912-61), the greatest in the long line and the first to assume the title of caliph (929). In fact the reign of the Caliph ‘Abd-al-Rahman marks the zenith of the Arab epoch in the peninsula. Throughout the Umayyad period Cordova continued to be the capital and enjoyed a period of incomparable splendour as the Western rival of Baghdad.

The Umayyad caliphate began to wane after the death of the talented regent al-Hájib al-Mansūr (1002), the “Bismarck of the . tenth century” and possibly the greatest statesman and general of Arab Spain, and entirely disappeared in 1031. On its ruins arose sundry petty kingdoms and principalities, many of which were always at daggers drawn with one another and all of which finally succumbed to the growing power of the native Christians, particularly those of the north. With the fall of Granada in 1492 the last vestige of Moslem rule vanished for ever from the peninsula.

The main task of \*Abd-al-Rahman al-Dakhil’s successors Treatment continued to be the pacification of the land and the solution of  $\text{£}_{\text{hristkns}}$  the knotty problems arising from the dual character of the population as Christians and Moslems and from the jealousies between old Arab Moslems and newly converted Spanish Moslems. From the beginning the policy followed by the Arab conquerors in the treatment of their subjects in Spain was not fundamentally different from that pursued in other conquered

510 THE ARABS IN EUROPE: SPAIN AND SICILY part iv  
lands. [50](#) Poll tax (Jizyalt), levied on Christians and Jews only, varied between twelve, twenty-four and forty-eight dirhams a year, according to the economic status of the payer. Women and children, the aged and destitute, as well as monks and people afflicted with chronic diseases, were of course exempt. Land tax (kharaf), averaging about twenty per cent, of the yield, was also collected from these dhimmis, but, unlike the poll tax, remained unaffected by the conversion of the taxpayer. Territories acquired by the sword, together with the landed property of the churches and of the lords who fled Spain at the time of the conquest, were confiscated and parcelled out among the conquerors as individuals; but the serfs were left on those lands as cultivators and were required to hand four-fifths of

the produce to the new Moslem lords. Out of this confiscated territory, however, one-fifth was appropriated by the state, which exacted from its serfs only one-third of the crops. Certain state lands were later divided into fiefs among Syrians and Arabs imported to quell revolts.

“No bondage in Islam” did not necessarily apply to a slave on becoming Moslem. Christian communities were left unmolested in the exercise of their faith and under their own ecclesiastical laws and native judges, whose jurisdiction, of course, did not include cases involving Moslems and offences against the religion of Islam. In general, therefore, the Moslem occupation of Spain entailed no new unbearable hardships to the natives. “In some respects”, declares Dozy,<sup>51</sup> “the Arab conquest was even a benefit to Spain.” It broke the power of the privileged group, including the nobility and clergy, ameliorated the condition of the servile class and gave the Christian landowner such rights as the alienation of his property which he was denied under the Visigoths.

### Renegades in arms

Nevertheless, Christians flocked to Islam. In mountain and rural regions they maintained the old national pattern and traditional culture, but in the cities they did not. As Neo-Moslems they constituted a social class by themselves, called by the Arabs Muwalladün (sing. Muwallad, adopted, affiliated) and by the Spaniards Muladies. In course of time these neophytes became the most discontented body in the population. Their ranks were

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recruited mainly from serfs and freedmen and their descendants who cultivated the soil or toiled as day

labourers. Some of them, though professing Islam, were “secret Christians”;<sup>1</sup> but they all knew well the clear and inexorable law of apostasy from Islam, which prescribed death. The Moslem Arabs treated all Muwal-lads as inferior, though some of them were of noble descent. By the end of the first century after the conquest these Muwallads had become the majority of the population in several cities, where they were the first to take up arms against the established order.

<sup>1</sup> Eulogius, “Memoriale sanctorum”, Bk. II. in A. Schottus, Hispanice illustrate<sup>^</sup> vol. iv (Frankfort, 1608), p. 2Q3

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### CIVIL DISTURBANCES

In Cordova, the southern suburb, referred to as al-rabad? was overwhelmingly populated with such Neo-Moslems, renegades from the Christian point of view. Sections of them were under the influence of students and teachers of theology and law (faqih)s, about four thousand of whom flourished in the capital. As long as Hisham I (788-96), the pious and scholarly son<sup>52 53</sup> and successor of ‘Abd-al-Rahman, ruled there was no immediate cause for trouble. But the reign of Hisham’s successor, al-Hakam I (796-822), who was gay and addicted to the chase and wine, changed the situation. Objection was made not only to the levity of al-Hakam but also to his bodyguard, composed mainly of negroes and other foreign mercenaries who knew no Arabic.<sup>54</sup> The trouble began in 805 when one day as the amir was passing in the streets the mob attacked him with stones while the theologians applauded. Seventy-two of the ringleaders who were later found implicated in a conspiracy to depose al-Hakam were apprehended and crucified. Uprisings in the renegade quarter followed one another,

culminating in a serious outbreak in 814<sup>55</sup> under the leadership of a Berber faqlh. Al-Hakam was shut up in his palace by the furious mob, but his cavalry finally succeeded in cutting down the insurgents. The suburb was dealt with ruthlessly. Its leaders, to the number of three hundred, were nailed to crosses, head downwards. The whole population was ordered to evacuate Spain in three days and the quarter was levelled to the ground. It was forbidden for anyone to build

there again.<sup>1</sup> Eight thousand families found asylum in Morocco, particularly in Fas (Fez), which Idris II, a descendant of \*Ali, was then building as his new capital.<sup>2</sup> Others, comprising fifteen thousand individuals,<sup>3</sup> landed at Alexandria. Here the refugees succeeded in making themselves masters of the town until 827, when they were forced to flee by a general of the Caliph al-Ma'mun. For a new abode the exiles chose Crete, a part of which still belonged to the Byzantine empire. They reduced the whole island and their leader founded a dynasty which lasted until Crete was reconquered by the Greeks in 961.<sup>4</sup>

Some Spanish Moslems, it should be noted, were invaluable allies to the Arabs and allowed themselves to be used against <sup>of the</sup><sup>9</sup> their former co-religionists. Such was the case of 'Amrus ibn- ditch" Yusuf, who in 807 was appointed by al-Hakam as governor of Toledo, the proud "royal city"<sup>5</sup> which in the eyes of the conquered natives was politically and ecclesiastically the most important town. Toledo had been restless under Moslem yoke, its renegades and Christians were in a chronic state of revolt. In honour of a visit from the fourteen-year-old crown prince Abd-al-Rahman, son of al-Hakam, 'Amrus at the suggestion of al-Hakam arranged for a banquet to which he invited hundreds of notable Toledans. In the courtyard of his newly erected castle stretched a long

ditch, whence had come the clay used in constructing that stronghold. Beside the ditch 'Amrus now planted an executioner. As each guest entered the courtyard the sword fell upon his neck. The corpses were dumped into the ditch. For several years after this "slaughter of the ditch",<sup>6</sup> turbulent Toledo remained tranquil.<sup>7</sup> But other cities such as

<sup>1</sup> In memory of this sensational episode al-Hakam won the sobriquet al-Rabad (the suburban). Ibn-al-Abbar, Hullah, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> The quarter where they settled is still called 'idwat al-Andalus, the bank of the Andalusians.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-al-Qutiyah, p. 51.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-al-Abbar, Hullah, pp. 39-40; Maqqari, vol. i, p. 219; Marrakushi, pp. 13-14;

Kindi, Wulah, pp. 161-5, 184; Yaqubi, vol. ii, p. 561; Yaqut, vol. 1, p. 337-<sup>see</sup> above, p. 202.

<sup>6</sup> Urbs regia in Isidorus Pacensis, "Del chronicon", in Espana sagrada: Theatre geographico-historico de la iglesia de Espana, ed. Fr. Henrique Florez, vol. vii (Madrid, 1753), p. 297; madinat al-muluk (the city of kings) in Qazwini, Athar, <sup>P</sup>\*<sup>3</sup> Waqat al-hufrah, ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi, p. 135; ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, p. 126.

<sup>7</sup> Ibn-al-Qutiyah, pp. 45-9; ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, pp. 71-2.

Merida remained in a state of revolt until the reign of 'Abd-al-Rahman II,<sup>1</sup> an energetic artisan of Umayyad Spanish unity and a zealous patron of music and astronomy.



As an amir 'Abd-al-Rahman II (822-52), later surnamed al-Awsat,<sup>2</sup> was influenced by four personages: a woman, a eunuch, a theologian and a singer. The woman was his favourite wife, Sultanah (queen) Tarub, a consummate intriguer. The eunuch was his gifted slave Nasr, the royal chamberlain, son of a Spaniard and a favourite with the queen.<sup>3</sup> The theologian was none other than the Berber ringleader of the  $\text{z}^{\wedge}\text{z}^{\wedge}$ -renegade mutiny of Cordova, Yahya ibn-Yahya (f 849) of the Masmudah tribe, a student of the Imam Malik ibn-Anas in Baghdad and the man responsible for the introduction of the Maliki rite into al-Andalus.<sup>4</sup> So firmly established did this rite become that the people there were wont to declare: "We know no other works but the Book of Allah and the Muzuatta of Malik".<sup>5</sup> The singer was a Persian tenor, Ziryab, who hailed from Baghdad.

Ziryab<sup>6</sup> was one of those musicians who had graced the court of Harun al-Rashid and his sons, where he had distinguished himself not only as an artist but also as a man of science

<sup>1</sup> Umayyad amirs of Cordova:

1. 'Abd-al-Rahman I (756-88)

| '

2. Hisham I (788-96)

|

3. Al-Hakam I (796-822)

' |

4. 'Abd-al-Rahman II (822-52)

I'

5. Muhammad I (852-86)

'I

r 1

6. Al-Mundhir (886-8) 7. 'Abdullah (888-912)

I Muhammad 'I

r 8. 'Abd-al-Rahman III (912-29, caliph 929-61)

<sup>2</sup> I.e. the middler, for coming between 'Abd al Rahman I and 'Abd-al-Rahman III. Ibn-al-Abbar, Hullah, p. 61; ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, p. 12£.

<sup>3</sup> Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 224-5; below, p. 516.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. iii, p. 173. Cf. ibn-al-Qutiyah, p. 34. Malik, according to ibn-Khallikan, dubbed Yahya "the wise man ['aqil] of al-Andalus", because he remained in his seat listening to the imam's lecture while an elephant was passing along the street and all the other students rushed out to see it.

<sup>6</sup> Maqdisi, p. 236.

<sup>6</sup> Pers, zar, "gold" + ab, "water"; nickname of abu-al-Hasan 'Ali ibn-Nafi'. 'Iqd, vol. iii, p. 241, calls Ziryab a black slave.

and letters. Thereby he aroused the jealousy of his equally renowned teacher, Ishaq al-Mawsili, and fled first to northwestern Africa. Anxious to make of Cordova a second Baghdad, 'Abd-al-Rahman, who maintained an opulent court and imitated the lavish prodigalities of Harun, rode out

(822) of his capital in person to welcome the young minstrel.<sup>1</sup> Ziryab lived with his new patron, from whom he received an emolument of 3000 dinars annually and real estate in Cordova worth 40,000 dinars, on terms of closest intimacy. He soon eclipsed all other musicians in the land. Besides being credited with knowing the words and tunes of 10,000 songs, which like other musicians he believed the jinn had taught him during the night, Ziryab shone as a poet and as a student of astronomy and geography.<sup>2</sup> What is more important, he proved, himself so polished, witty and entertaining that he soon became the most popular figure among the smart set of the time, even an arbiter of fashion. Hitherto hair had been worn long and parted on the forehead, now it was trimmed low on the brow; water had been drunk out of metal vessels, now out of glasses; certain dishes, including asparagus, had been unpopular, now those same dishes became favourites—all because of Ziryab's example.<sup>3</sup>

Toward the close of 'Abd-al-Rahman's reign the lure of the J^for language, literature, religion and other institutions of the con- d<sub>om</sub> querors—including the harem system—had become so strong that a large number of urban Christians had become Arabi-cized though not actually Islamized. Dazzled by the glamour of Arab civilization and conscious of their own inferiority in art, poetry, philosophy and science, native Christians soon began to ape the Arab way of living. These imitators now became so numerous as to constitute a social class by themselves and acquired the epithet Mozarabs.<sup>4</sup> Spain, be it remembered, was one of the last countries of Europe to be Christianized, some of its country districts were still pagan at the time of the Moslem conquest and its Visigothic Arianism agreed in its Chnstology with Moslem doctrine. A contemporary Christian writer of Cordova

deplores the fact that the Christian laymen shun the works of the Latin Fathers and are "intoxicated with Arab

1 Cf. ibn-Khaldun, *Muqaddamah*, p. 357, quoted by Maqqari, vol.i, p. 222.

2 Maqqari, vol. ii, p. 87; ibn-al-Qutiyah, p. 68.

8 Maqqari, vol. ii, pp. 87-8.

4 From Ar. *musta'rib*, he who adopts the Arabic language and customs.

eloquence".<sup>1</sup> As early as 724 or thereabout John, bishop of Seville, is said to have made an Arabic recension of the Bible for the convenience of Arabicized Christians and the Moors.<sup>2</sup>

As a reaction against this tendency toward Arabicization, a curious movement now started among the Christian zealots of Cordova which resulted in the voluntary martyrdom of several men and women. The leading spirit was an ascetic priest, Eulogius, supported by his wealthy friend, later his biographer, Alvaro.<sup>3</sup> Nothing could have crystallized the sentiment of the movement better than the execution on the feast of Ramadan (850) of another Cordovan priest, Perfectus by name, for having reviled Muhammad and cursed Islam.<sup>4</sup> Headed by the bishop of Cordova the populace lost no time in declaring Perfectus a saint and in attributing miracles to him; for did he not before his decapitation correctly prophesy the immediate death of Nasr, the eunuch chamberlain in charge of execution? Nasr, it seems, had entered into a conspiracy with Tarüb to poison her royal husband; Tarüb's motive was to secure for her own son 'Abdullah the succession to the throne to the prejudice of Muhammad (the eldest of 'Abd-al-Rahman's forty-five

sons), who was born of another wife. 'Abd-al-Rahman got wind of the scheme, and when Nasr brought a phial claiming that it held a wonderful remedy the monarch ordered him to try it first on himself.<sup>5</sup>

Not long after the Perfectus episode a monk named Isaac appeared before the qâdi on the pretext of wishing to be converted to Islam and began to heap curses on Muhammad. Like Perfectus he was beheaded and soon became a saint.<sup>6</sup> Now the race began. Clergy and laity went out of their way to blaspheme Islam with the simple intention of receiving the inescapable penalty that they well knew went with such an offence. Eleven thus “suffered martyrdom” in less than two months.

Flora and

Eulogius

Instigated by 'Abd-al-Rahman, the bishops hesitatingly held a council which, against the protests of Eulogius, forbade Chris-

<sup>1</sup> Alvaro, “Indiculus luminosus”, in *España sagrada*, vol. xi, p. 274.

<sup>2</sup> *Primera crónica general, estoria de España que mandó componer Alfonso el Sabio*, ed. Ramón Menéndez Pidal (Madrid, 1906), vol. i, p. 326.

<sup>3</sup> “Vita vel passio Beatissimi Martyris Eulogij”, in *España sagrada*, vol. x, pp. 543-63; “Vida y martirio de S. Eulogio”, in *España sagrada*, vol. x. pp. 411 seq.

\* Alvaro, “Indiculus”, in *España sagrada*, vol. xi, pp. 225-6.

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-al-Qūṭīyah, pp. 76-7; ibn-Khaldūn, vol. iv, p. 130.

- Alvaro, "Indiculus", in España sagrada, vol. xi, pp. 237-8.

tians henceforth to aspire to this holy death. But it was all to no avail. At last came the turn of a beautiful young follower of Eulogius, Flora, daughter of a Christian mother and Moslem father. Together with a youthful nun, Mary, who was a sister of one of the previously decapitated monks, Flora had succumbed to the temptation of blaspheming the Prophet and was merely committed to jail by a compassionate qadi. Here Eulogius, who had also been cast in jail and had cherished a pure and spotless love for Flora, employed all the persuasive rhetoric at his command to encourage the girl he loved and her companion, as the two wavered in their sacrificial ardour, to go to the scaffold. The virgin would-be martyrs did not recant; they suffered the supreme penalty on November 24, 851.<sup>56</sup> This hysterical desire for self-immolation did not subside until Eulogius himself in 859, then bishop of Cordova, was executed by Muhammad I (852-86), who had inaugurated a policy of severe repression. The total included some forty-four martyrs.

Other disturbances, not so fantastic though more serious in Provinces character, were in store. In the first place, neither Muhammad nor his two sons and successors, al-Mundhir (886-8) and Abdullah (888-912), represent the best tradition of tolerance and energy associated with the house of Umayyah. Then there were the usual difficulties attendant on the accession to the throne, which according to Moslem dynastic practice went to the eldest or the ablest in the reigning family. After a rule of less than two years al-Mundhir was poisoned at the instigation of his successor by a lancet used by the surgeon in bleeding him.<sup>57</sup> In the

meantime Muwallad and Mozarab revolutions were continuing throughout the domain and several states were breaking loose and asserting their independence under Berber or Spanish Moslem rule. Such separatist movements, sponsored by Neo-Moslems who posed as nationalist champions in provinces which in theory were subject to Cordova, continued to engage the attention of the Umayyad amirs till the beginning of the tenth century.

In the south the mountainous state of Regio,<sup>58</sup> with its capital

518 THE ARABS IN EUROPE: SPAIN AND SICILY PART IV at Archidona, entered in 873 into treaty relations with Muhammad, who practically recognized its independence subject to a yearly tribute. The natives were mostly Islamized Spaniards. In the northern marches independent Aragon under the banu-Qasi,<sup>59 60</sup> an old Visigothic family which had embraced Islam, incorporated within itself in the middle of the ninth century Saragossa, Tudela and other important frontier towns. The banu-Qasi were in league with their neighbours to the west, the kings of Leon. Throughout the land around Toledo, a city which was more often in rebellion than in peace, the Berber banu-dhu-al-Nun, at the head of bands of brigands, carried fire and sword. In Seville, which as the chief centre of Roman culture under the Visigoths had a population mostly descended from Romans and Goths, the banu-Hajjaj became all-powerful.<sup>61</sup> These rulers of Seville and its district were descended in the female line from Sarah, granddaughter of Witiza and wife of an Arab. The historian ibn-al-Qutiyah (son of the Gothic woman) was also descended from Sarah.<sup>62</sup> In the Galician southwest a daring renegade of Glenda and Badajoz, Abd-al-Rah-man ibn-Marwan al-Jilliqi<sup>63</sup> by name, founded an independent principality whence, with the aid of

Alfonso III, king of Leon and natural ally of all rebels against the Arab government, he spread terror far and wide. At the south-western corner of the peninsula, which is the modern Algarve<sup>64</sup> of Portugal, another renegade established himself as master towards the close of Muhammad's reign. In the south-east Murcia (Ar. Mursiyah), under another renegade prince, shook off Arab suzerainty. But the most dangerous and implacable of all rebels was one Umar ibn-Hafsun.

### Ibn-Hatsun

'Umar was a Moslem descendant of a Visigothic count. Starting his colourful career about 880 as an organizer of a band of brigands with headquarters in an ancient castle on Mount Bobastro,<sup>1</sup> 'Umar, after serving temporarily in the royal army at Cordova, rose with the support of the mountaineers of Elvira (Il-birah) to a position of leadership in the Spanish south against Moslem rule. His rebellion engaged the attention of three amirs, Muhammad, al-Mundhir and 'Abdullah. To the southern Christians and malcontents 'Umar became the champion of a long-suppressed nationality. To the Arabs, however, he was "the accursed", "the rogue".<sup>2</sup> After many vicissitudes of fortune he succeeded in isolating Cordova and opened negotiations with the 'Abbasids<sup>3</sup> and the Aghlabid ruler of Africa with a view to receiving an appointment for himself as governor of Spain. Failing in this ambitious plan, he professed about the year 899 the religion of his forbears, which he had long concealed in his heart,<sup>4</sup> adopting Samuel as a baptismal name. Again and again did Samuel shake the Umayyad throne to its very foundation. The authority of the successors of 'Abd-al-Rahman I stood jeopardized, sadly in need of a restorer.

<sup>1</sup> Ar. Bubashtar; ibn-al-Qutiyah, p. 90; Akhbar, p. 150. Cf. ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, pp. to8, 120, 204; ibn-al-Athir, vol. vii,



p. 295.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, pp. 117, 120, 123. Cf. 'Iqd, vol. ii, p. 367.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, p. 135.  
143.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, j

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### THE Umayyad Caliphate of Cordova

Caliph 'Abd-al-Rahmān al-Nāsir

When 'Abd-al-Rahmān III succeeded his grandfather, 'Abdullāh, in 912, he was barely twenty-three years of age. 'Abdullah had instigated one of his own sons to kill the other, 'Abd-al-Rahmān's father, Muhammad, on a mere suspicion of disloyalty.<sup>1</sup> Later he connived at the murder of his other son, the fratricide, leaving himself childless. At the accession of 'Abd-al-Rahmān the vast Moslem state organized by his first namesake had shrunk to Cordova and its environs.

The young amir proved himself the man of the hour. His were those qualities of resoluteness, daring and candour which characterize leaders of men in all ages. Slowly but surely 'Abd-al-Rahmān reclaimed the lost provinces, one after the other. With characteristic energy, which he displayed throughout his long reign of half a century (912-61),<sup>2</sup> he extended his conquests on all sides. Eciya was the first to surrender and that on the last day of 912.<sup>3</sup> Elvira followed suit. Jaen offered no resistance. Archidona agreed to pay tribute. Seville opened its gates toward the close of 913. Regio, whose mountain fastnesses had shielded the bold followers of ibn-Hafsūn, was reduced step by step. The

redoubtable leader himself remained defiant in his impregnable Bobastro until death came in 917 to put out of the way that formidable enemy of thirty-seven years' standing. Only Toledo remained unsubdued, but in 932 the proud former capital succumbed to famine and siege. The whole land was thus pacified and the state consolidated under the sway of a beneficent absolute ruler.

In the meantime external enemies were threatening. Among these the most dangerous were the Moslem Fātimids to the south and the Christian kings of Leon to the north.

'Ubaydullah al-Mahdi, the founder of the Fātimid dynasty in Tunisia in 909, had

[1](#)

Miskawayh, vol. ii, p. 414; Yāqūt, Udaba , vol. vi, p. 266.

[2](#)

\* Shortening of shahanshah, Pers, for king of kings, modelled after the ancient Iranian title of royalty. The Arabic correspondent, malik al-mulúk, was perhaps first assumed by 'Adud's son Baha'-al-Dawlah and was especially favoured by the later dynasties of Turkish origin.

[3](#)

Vol. ii, pp. 404-8. See ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, p. 16.  
Qifti, p. 331.

[4](#)

[4](#)

<sup>6</sup> Ibn-abi-U\$aybi'ah, vol. i, pp. 310, 238, 244; Qifti, pp. 235-6, 337-8, 438.

[5](#)

• Ibn-Khallikán, vol. ii, p. 159.  
vol. ii, p. 408.

[7](#) Miskawayh,

[6](#)

<sup>8</sup> “The honour of the state.” Ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, pp. 16-17; Rüdhráwari, Dhayl

[7](#)

(supplement to Miskawayh, Taj drib, vol. iii), ed. Amedroz, pp. 136 seq.

[8](#)

<sup>9</sup> “The splendour of the state.” Ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, pp. 42 seq.\ Rüdhráwari,

[9](#)

PP- 153 W-

[10](#)

Ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, p. 71; ibn-Khallikán, vol. i, p. 356.

[11](#)

18. Al-Muqtadir                      19. Al-Qâhir

20. Al-Radi 21. Al-Muttaqi 23. Al-Muti\* (946-74) I

24. Al-Ta’i\* (974-91)

25. Al-Qadir (991-1031)

## 26. Al-Qa'im (1031-75)

The advent of the Saljuq Turks ushers in a new and notable 6. The era in the history of Islam and the caliphate. At their appearance <sup>Saljaqs</sup> from the east in the early part of the eleventh century the caliph held but a shadow of his former power and his empire had been almost entirely dismembered. The Umayyads in Spain and the Shi'ite Fatimids in Egypt and North Africa were established beyond any hope of displacement from Baghdad. North Syria and upper Mesopotamia, as noted before, were in the hands of turbulent Arab chieftains, some of whom had succeeded in founding dynasties. Persia, Transoxiana and the lands to the east and south were parcelled among Buwayhid and Ghaznawid princes or held by sundry petty dynasts, each waiting for an opportunity to fly at the throat of the other. Political and military anarchy prevailed everywhere. Shi'ite-Sunnite confusion was the order of the day. Islam seemed crushed to the ground.

Into this distracted realm a chieftain named Saljuq had entered about 956 at the head of his clan of Turkoman Ghuzz (or Oghuz). Coming from the Kirghiz steppes of Turkestan, <sup>1</sup> "The sword of the state." Ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, pp. 16-19, 32-5; Rudhrawari, pp. 184, 260.

Ibn-al-Athir, vol. x, pp. 43-4.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. pp. 589-90.

[15](#)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. p. 589.

[16](#)

29. Al-Mustarshid (1118-35)

I .

30. Al-Rashid (1135-6)

31. Al-Muqtafi (1136-60)

i .

32. Al-Mustanjid (1160-70)

i

[17](#)

[18](#)

33. Al-Mustadi' (1170-80)

[19](#)

34. Al-Nâçir (1180-1225)

[20](#)

Ibn-al-Athir, vol. x, p. 192(4].  
p. 154.

[21](#) Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i,

[21](#)

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. x, pp. 338-9; ibn-al-Qalanisi, Dhayl, p. 173.

[22](#)

<sup>4</sup> Founder of the Atabeg dynasty of al-Mawsil and Syria. The atabegs (Tur. ata,

[23](#)

“father” + beg, “prince”) were originally guardians or tutors of the young Saljuq princes and finally replaced them in supreme power. Abu-Shamah, al-Rawdatayn fi Akhbar al-Dawlalayn, vol. i (Cairo, 1257), p. 24.

[24](#)

See W. Barthold, Turkestan, 2nd ed., tr. H. A. R. Gibb (Oxford, 1928), pp. 399-400. Chingiz had two Moslems on his staff as he advanced westward. Long before his time Moslem merchants had carried on trade with the nomadic tribes of eastern Mongolia. See above, pp. 343-4.

[25](#)

The estimates, all probably exaggerated, vary from 60,000 to 70,000.

<sup>8</sup> Mustawfi-i-Qazwini, vol. i, p.498.

[26](#)

\* Juwayni, pt. 1, pp. 17 seq.', ibn-al-Athir, vol. xii, pp. 234 seq.

[27](#)

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Yaqut, *Bulddn*, vol. iv, p. 958. In 1220, about a year before the disastrous event, Yaqut visited Harat, which he described as the largest and richest city he had ever seen.

[28](#)

Above, p. 286.

[29](#)

Rashid-al-Din, *awr*, ed. and cr. Quatremere, vol. i, pp. 166 sej.

[30](#)

Tur. *il*, “tribe” + Tur. *khan*, “lord” = lord of the tribe, subordinate chief, indicating the feudal homage owed to the Khaqaan (Great Khan) in remote Mongolia, north of the Gobi Desert, later in Peking.

[31](#)

Whether he was Arab or Berber is uncertain. Cf. Maqqari (Leyden), vol. i, p. 159; ibn-Khaldün, vol. iv, p. 117; ibn-Tdhári, ed. Dozy, vol. ii, p. 6; tr. Fagnan, vol. ii, p. 7; *Akhbar Maj mu ah fi Fath al-Andalus*, ed. Lafuente y Alcántara (Madrid, 1867), p. 6 (text) = p. 20 (tr.).

[32](#)

Mentioned by al-Idrisi, *Dhikr al-Andalus* (extracts from *Nuzhat al-Mushtaq*), ed. and tr. Don Josef A. Conde (Madrid, 1799), PP- <sup>TI</sup>> 35» 44

[33](#)

' Idrisi, p. 36.

[34](#)

Ar. Ulyán, Baládhuri, p. 230=Hitti, p. 365; Yulyán in Akhbdr, vol. i, p. 4; ibn-Tdhári, vol. ii, p. 6; Maqqari, vol. i, p. 159; ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, ed. Torrey, p. 206; Yüliyán in ibn-al-Athir, vol. iv, p. 444. According to the reconstruction of Francisco Codera, Estudios críticos de historia árabe española, ser. 2 (Saragossa, 1903), p. 47, his real name was Urban or Olban. The story of the violation of his beautiful daughter Florinda by Roderick, which is usually offered in explanation of Julian's co-operation with the Arabs, is purely legendary. In fact the entire story of the conquest has been richly embellished by both Spanish and Arab chroniclers.

[35](#)

Sp., from Ar. Sabtah, originally from L. Septem (seven), its full name being ad Septem Fratres. The city crowned the ancient Abyla, one of the range "Septem Fratres" (seven brothers). Idrisi, p. 12.

[36](#)

This small river is now called Salado. The Arabs called it Wadi Bakkah (Lakkah), corrupted into Guadilbeca and therefore confused with Guadelete. Cf. Stanley Lane-Poole, with the collaboration of Arthur Gilman, The Moors in Spain (New York, 1911), pp. 14, 23.

[37](#)

Referred to in Arabic chronicles simply as al-Buhayrah (the lake).



[38](#)

<sup>6</sup> Roderick = Ar. Ludhriq, Lazriq, Rudhriq; Witiza = Ghaytasah, Ghitishah, etc. Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 160, 161; ibn-'Abd-al-Hakam, p. 206; ibn-Tdhári, vol. ii, p. 8; ibn-Khaldün, vol. iv, p. 117; Akhbdr, p. 8; Mas'üdi, vol. i, p. 359.

[39](#)

Ibn-Tdhári, vol. ii, pp. io-n; Akhbdr, p. 10. Cf. Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 164-5.

[40](#)

Maqqari, vol. i, p. iSo. Cf. ibn-Khallikán. vol. iii, p. 27.

[41](#)

Etymologically this word is connected with the name of the Vandals, who had occupied the land before the Arabs.

[42](#)

See above, pp. 285-6, 450

[43](#)

<sup>1</sup> Corrupted by the old Christian chroniclers into Bcnemaugius.

[44](#)

<sup>8</sup> Akhbdr, pp. 52-4; ibn-al-Athir. vol. v, p. 377.

5°5

[45](#)

Ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, p. 50; ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi, p. 76.

[46](#)

<sup>1</sup> The capital of the mountainous province of Regio (Ar. Rayyah); Yaqut, vol. i, !>.»• 195, 207.

[47](#)

Ibn-al-Athir, vol. v, p. 378; ibn-'Idhari. vol. ii, p. 48; Maqqari, vol. i, p. 212.

[48](#)

\* Akhbdr, p. 84. Cf. ibn-al-Qutiyah, p. 20.

[49](#)

Akhbdr, pp. 88-9; ibn-al-Athir, vol. v, p. 378.

[50](#)

See above, pp. 170-71.

[51](#)

\* Histoire des Musulmans d'Espagne, ed. É. Lévi-Provençal (Leyden, 1932), vol. i, p. 278; tr. Francis G. Stokes, Spanish Islam (London, 1913), p. 236.

[52](#)

Ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, pp. 73, 77; ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi, pp. 209 seq.\ 'lqd, vol. ii, p. 365; ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, p. 126.

[53](#)

Ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi, pp. 101-2; ibn-al-Qutiyah, p. 42.

[54](#)

Hence their sobriquet al-khurs^ the dumb ones; ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, p. 127;

Maqqari, vol. i, p. 220.

[55](#)

a.h. 202 (817-18) in ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, p. 77. Cf. ibn-al-Qutiyah, pp 51-2.

[56](#)

Espana sagrada, vol. x, pp. 417-18; Alvaro, "Vita Eulogij", in zbid. pp. 547

[57](#)

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, pp. 160-61, 122, vol. i, introduction by Dozy, pp. 44-6.

Cf ibn-al-Qutiyah, p. 102; ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, p. 132; Akhbar, p. 150.

[58](#)

' Ar. Rayyah, which ibn-Khaldun (vol. iv, p. 132, cf. p. 134). among others, makes a town and confuses with Malaga. Malaga was the capital of Regio under the Visigoths and after the reign of 'Abd-al-Rahman III. See Idnsi, p. 28.

[59](#)

Benikazzi in Sebastian, "Chronicon", in Espana sagrada, vol. xiii, p. 487

[60](#)

Ibn-al-Qutiyah, pp. 85, 113-14. Qasi is mistaken for "Musa" in ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, p. 134, where his descendants are termed "Lub", Lope. Cf. ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, pp. 175-6.

[61](#)

Ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, pp. 128 seqs, ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, p. 136.

[62](#)

Ibn-al-Qutiyah, pp. 4-6.

[63](#)

<sup>s</sup> I.e. the Galician. See ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, pp. 102, 104; ibn-al-Qutiyah, pp. 89-90; ibn-al-Athir, vol. vii, pp. 127-8; Dabbi, p. 359; ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv. p. 131; Yaqut, Euldan, vol. ii, p. no.

[64](#)

From Ar. al-i'harb, the west.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Tdhäri, vol. i, introduction by Dozy, pp. 47-50; ibn-al-Abbar, Hullah, p. 91.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-al-Abbär, Hullah, p. 99, is right in claiming for 'Abd-al-Rahmän III the longest reign in Islam down to his time. See above, p. 481, n. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-Tdhäri, vol. ii, p. 165.

negotiated an alliance with ibn-Hafsun and sent emissaries and spies across the straits. As they claimed descent from Fatimah, daughter of the Prophet and wife of 'Ali, the Fatimid caliphs would acknowledge no authority in Islam other than their own. The Cordovan ibn-Masarrah (883-931), the pseudo-Empe-doclean philosopher who introduced into the West an esoteric system of writing whose words bore an inner and mysterious meaning which only the initiates could understand, may have been commissioned to establish a Fatimid party in Spain through his organized fraternities. Realizing that his position in Spain could not be safe while an enemy flourished in Africa, 'Abd-al-Rahman, whose suzerainty was recognized in Morocco as early as 917 or 918, obtained possession of Ceuta in 931 and ultimately secured homage from a great part of the Barbary coast.<sup>1</sup> His enlarged and renovated fleet,<sup>2</sup> second to none in the world of that

age, with Almería<sup>3</sup> as chief harbour, disputed with the Fatimid navy the supremacy of the western Mediterranean. In 956 a Spanish fleet of seventy ships devastated parts of the African coast in retaliation for a raid made on the Spanish shore by the Sicilian fleet at the command of the Fatimid caliph.<sup>4</sup>

While these operations against domestic and foreign foes were in progress 'Abd-al-Rahman, whose mother was a Christian slave, was often engaged in the holy war against the Christians of the north who had hitherto never been subdued. Here the land of the Basques<sup>5</sup> occupied the centre, bridging the Pyrenees. To the east lay the still embryonic kingdoms of Navarre and Aragon. To the west stretched those territories which developed into the kingdoms of Castile and Leon. As early as 9<sup>4</sup> the undaunted

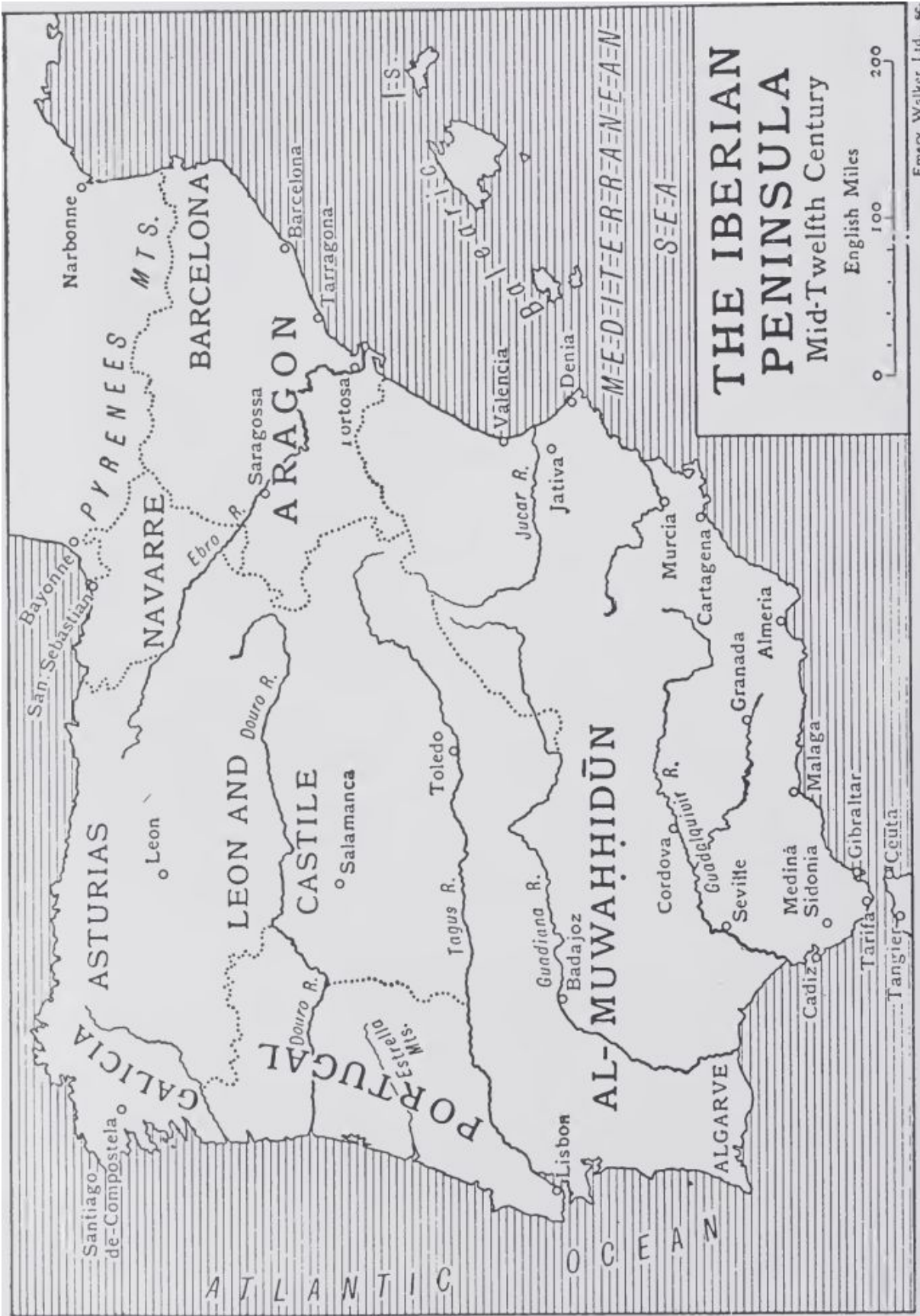
<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, pp. 137-8, quoted in Maqqari, vol. i, p. 227. .

' The Spanish Moslem fleet had several encounters with the Scandinavian pirates known in England as Northmen (Norsemen), with the Normans of France and with the Danes, to all of whom the Arabs applied the generic term Majus (fireworshippers). The first occasion on which the Majus attempted a landing was in 844, in the reign of 'Abd-al-Rahman II, when with their eighty ships they anchored before Lisbon and then occupied Seville. In 858-61, in the reign of Muhammad I, they attempted several landings on the coasts of the peninsula. Ibn-al-Qutiyah, p. 63; ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, pp. 89-90, 99, Mas'udi, vol. i, p. 3<sup>4</sup>, ibn-al-Athir, vol. vii,

pp. 11-12, 58; Dozy, Recherches, vol. ii, pp. 250-371.

\* From Ar. al-Mariyah (watchtower).

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, p 46; tr. de Slane, Histoire des Berberes et des dynasties musulmanes de l'Afrique septentrionale, ed. Paul Casanova, vol. ii (Paris, 1927), P'®<sup>5</sup> "Bashkans" of pseudo-ibn-Qutaybah, pp. 121, 132; ibn-al-Athir, vol. vii, p. 48; ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, p. 140.



## CH. xxxvii Umayyad Caliphate of Cordova

523 king of Leon, Ordono II,<sup>1</sup> taking advantage of the situation in the Moslem kingdom, commenced hostilities by devastating the region to the south. Three years later he succeeded in capturing one of 'Abd-al-Rahman's generals and nailing his head beside that of a wild boar to the wall of a frontier fortress, San Esteban de Gormaz,<sup>2</sup> which the Moslem general was besieging. Pillaging forays from these northern enemies were successive. In 920 'Abd-al-Rahman took the field in person, razed San Esteban (S. Estevan), demolished a number of other strongholds<sup>3</sup> in that debatable land between Christianity and Islam and at Vai de Junqueras (vale of reeds) met the combined forces of Ordono II and Sancho<sup>4</sup> the Great of Navarre and inflicted on them a severe defeat. After overrunning parts of Navarre and adjacent Christian lands, 'Abd-al-Rahman returned triumphantly to his capital. Four years later he penetrated as far north as Pampe-luna,<sup>5</sup> capital of Navarre, which he demolished. Its haughty king, the bulwark of Christianity in the east, referred to as "dog" by ibn-Tdhari,<sup>6</sup> was reduced to impotence for a long time after this. About the same time the other champion of the native cause, Ordono, died and the civil discord which followed brought a lull in military activity.

The remaining years of 'Abd-al-Rahman's long reign were filled with evidences of wise and able administration. One of the first among those was the proclamation that beginning Friday, January 16, 929, the ruling sovereign should be designated in all public prayers and official documents as caliph. For himself he chose the title al-Khallfah al-Nasir li-Dln Allah, the caliph defender of the religion of God.<sup>7</sup> It was most appropriate for him who brought Moslem Spain to a



higher position than it had ever before enjoyed to assume the role of amir al-muminin especially in view of the low level to which the Eastern caliphate had fallen.

<sup>1</sup> “Ardun” of Mas’udi, vol. iii, p. 75; Maqqari, vol. i, p. 233; “Ardhun” of ibn-Tdhari, vol. ii, pp. 179, 187.

<sup>2</sup> Or Castro Moros; Ar. Shant Ishtiban, Ashtin or Qashtar Murush.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-Tdhari, vol. ii, p. 183 seq. Ibn-’Abd-Rabbihi, poet laureate of \*Abd-al-Rahman, speaks of seventy strongholds reduced in one campaign, 'Iqd, vol. ii, p. 368.

<sup>4</sup> “Shanjah” of ibn-al-Qutiyah, p. 114; “Shanjah” of Maqqari, vol. i, p. 233; “Sanjah” of ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, p. 141.

<sup>5</sup> “Banbalunah” in Maqqari, vol. i, p. 234; ibn-Tdhari, vol. ii, pp. 196, 199.

- Vol. ii, p. 200.

<sup>7</sup> 'Iqd, vol. ii, pp. 368, 369; ibn-Tdhari vol. ii, pp. 162, 211-12; ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, p. 137, copied by Maqqari, vol. i, p. 227

As defender of the faith the Caliph al-Nasir felt it his supreme duty to press the holy war against the Christians, who never ceased to cast covetous eyes on their ancestral territory to the south. His campaigns continued until the year 939, in which King Ramiro II of Leon and Queen Regent Tota<sup>1 2</sup> of Navarre, widow of Sancho the Great, inflicted on him at Alhandega, south of Salamanca, the first serious check his military operations had encountered in twenty-

seven years of almost incessant warfare. The caliph's huge army was practically annihilated, he himself barely escaped with his life. This same Tota later appeared at the court of the caliph together with her son, in whose name she was ruling Navarre, and with her grandson Sancho the Fat, ex-king of Leon, seeking medical advice for Sancho and military aid to reinstall him on the throne.<sup>3</sup> The royal guests were received in great state, while the Moslem capital was treated to the grand sight of Christian royalty knocking in supplication at the door of the caliph whose word was law from the mouth of the Ebro to the Atlantic and from the foot of the Pyrenees to Gibraltar. Through the skill of the Jewish court physician and statesman Hasdáy ben-Shaprüt, Sancho was relieved of his excessive corpulence, which had cost him his crown, and through the caliph's efforts he regained in 960 his lost authority.

The caliph's court at that time was one of the most glamorous in all Europe. Accredited to it were envoys from the Byzantine emperor as well as from the monarchs of Germany, Italy and France.<sup>4</sup> Its seat, Cordova, with half a million inhabitants, seven hundred mosques<sup>5</sup> and three hundred public baths, yielded in magnificence only to Baghdad and Constantinople. The royal palace, with four hundred rooms and apartments housing thousands of slaves and guards, stood north-west of the town on one of the spurs of the Sierra Morena overlooking the Guadalquivir. 'Abd-al-Rahman started its construction in 936 with money left, so the legend goes, by one of his concubines. His first thought was to use the fund for ransoming captives in Christian hands. Since none were found he acted on the suggestion of his other concubine, al-Zahra' (she with the bright face), and erected this palatial mansion which he named after her. Marble was brought from Numidia and Carthage; columns as well as basins with golden statues were imported

or received as presents from Constantinople; and 10,000 workmen with 1500 beasts of burden laboured on it for a score of years.<sup>1</sup> Enlarged and embellished by al-Nasir's two successors, al-Zahra' became the nucleus of a royal suburb whose remains, partly excavated in and after 1910, can still be seen.

In al-Zahra' the caliph surrounded himself with a bodyguard of "Slavs" which numbered 3750<sup>2</sup> and headed his standing army of a hundred thousand men.<sup>3</sup> At first applied to slaves and prisoners captured by Germans and others from among the Slavonic tribes and sold to the Arabs, the name Slav<sup>4</sup> was later given to all purchased foreigners: Franks, Galicians, Lombards and the like, who as a rule were secured young and Arabicized. With the aid of these "Janissaries" or "Mamluks" of Spain the caliph not only kept treason and brigandage in check but reduced the influence of the old Arab aristocracy. Commerce and agriculture consequently flourished and the sources of income for the state were multiplied. The royal revenue amounted to 6,245,000 dinars, a third of which sufficed for the army and a third for public works, while the balance was placed in reserve.<sup>5</sup> Never before was Cordova so prosperous, al-Andalus so rich and the state so triumphant. And all this was achieved through the genius of one man, who, we are told, died at the ripe age of seventy-three leaving a statement that he had known only fourteen days of happiness.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, pp. 225, 240, 246-8; ibn-Hawqal, p. 77; ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, p. 144; Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 344-7; ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, p. 413.

\* Ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, p. 247.

<sup>8</sup> Mas'udi, vol. iii, pp. 74, 78. Mas'udi was a contemporary, though distant, author.

<sup>4</sup> Ar. \$aqalibah; see above, p. 235

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, p. 247; ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, p. 413. Cf. ibn-Hawqal, p. 77.

- Ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, p. 248.

## POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The reigns of 'Abd-al-Rahman III and his successor al-Hakam II (961-76), together with the dictatorship of al-Hajib al-Mansur (977-1002), mark the apogee of Moslem rule in the West. Neither before nor after this was Moslem Spain able to exercise the same political influence in European and African affairs.

### Cordova

In this period the Umayyad capital took its place as the most cultured city in Europe and, with Constantinople and Baghdad, as one of the three cultural centres of the world. With its one hundred and thirteen thousand homes,<sup>6</sup> twenty-one suburbs,<sup>7</sup> seventy libraries and numerous bookshops, mosques and palaces, it acquired international fame and inspired awe and admiration in the hearts of travellers. It enjoyed miles of paved streets illuminated by lights from the bordering houses<sup>8</sup> whereas, "seven hundred years after this time there was not so much as one public lamp in London", and "in Paris, centuries subsequently, whoever stepped over his threshold on a rainy day stepped up to his ankles in mud".<sup>9</sup> When the University of Oxford still looked upon bathing as a heathen custom, generations of Cordovan scientists had been enjoying baths in

luxurious establishments. The Arab attitude toward the Nordic barbarians found expression in the words of the learned Toledan judge Sa'id<sup>10 11</sup> (f 1070), who thought that "because the sun does not shed its rays directly over their heads, their climate is cold and atmosphere clouded. Consequently their temperaments have become cold and their humours rude, while their bodies have

527 grown large, their complexion light and their hair long. They lack withal sharpness of wit and penetration of intellect, while stupidity and folly prevail among them." Whenever the rulers of Leon, Navarre or Barcelona needed a surgeon, an architect, a master singer or a dressmaker, it was to Cordova that they applied. The fame of the Moslem capital penetrated distant Germany where a Saxon nun styled it "the jewel of the world".<sup>1</sup> Such was the city which housed the Umayyad ruler and his government.

The organization of the government in the Western caliphate Govern, did not differ radically from that of the Eastern. The caliphal <sup>institu</sup> office was hereditary, though army officers and nobles quite often tions elected him whom they favoured. When there was a hâjib (chamberlain) he stood above the vizirs, who communicated through him with the caliph. Below the vizirs came the kuttâb (secretaries), who together with the vizirs formed the diwan.

The provinces, which apart from Cordova were six in number, were each ruled by a civil and military governor called wall. Some important cities were also under walls. Justice was administered by the caliph, who as a rule delegated the authority to qâdis, at the head of whom stood the qâdi al-qudâh in Cordova. Criminal and police cases were heard by a special judge, sahib al-shurtah. Another special judge in Cordova, sahib al-mazahm, heard complaints against public officials. The usual sentences involved fine, scourging, imprisonment, mutilation and, in

case of blasphemy, heresy and apostasy, death. An interesting officer was the muh-tasib (Sp. almotacén), who, besides directing the police, acted as overseer of trade and markets, checked weights and measures and intervened in cases of gambling, sex immorality and improper public dress.<sup>2</sup>

The state depended for its revenue mostly on duties imposed on industry imports and exports. Spain under the caliphate was one of the wealthiest and most thickly populated lands of Europe. The capital boasted some thirteen thousand weavers and a flourishing leather industry. From Spain the art of tanning and embossing leather was carried to Morocco and from these two lands it was brought to France and England, as the terms cordovan, cordwainer and

<sup>1</sup> Hrotsvitha in *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum*; Hrotsvitha opera, ed. Paulus

de Winterfeld (Berlin, 1902), p. 52, l. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Saqati, *Fi Âdâb al-Hisbah*, ed. Colin and Lévi-Provençal (Paris, 1931), pp. 3 seq.; Lévi-Provençal, *L'Espagne musulmane au X<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1932) pp. 79-90.

Morocco indicate. Wool and silk were woven not only in Cordova but in Malaga, Almeria and other centres.<sup>1</sup> Sericulture, originally a monopoly of the Chinese, was introduced by Moslems into Spain, where it thrived. Almeria also produced glassware and brasswork. Paterna in Valencia was the home of pottery. Jaen and Algarve were noted for their mines of gold and silver, Cordova for its iron and lead<sup>2</sup> and Malaga for its rubies. Toledo, like Damascus, was famous all over the world for its swords.<sup>3</sup> The art of inlaying steel

and other metals with gold and silver and decorating them with flower patterns, which was introduced from Damascus, flourished in several Spanish and other European centres and left a linguistic heritage in such words as damascene, damaskeen, French damasquiner and Italian damaschino.

## Agriculture

The Spanish Arabs introduced agricultural methods practised in Western Asia. They dug canals,<sup>4</sup> cultivated grapes and introduced, among other plants and fruits, rice,<sup>5</sup> apricots,<sup>6</sup> peaches,<sup>7</sup> pomegranates,<sup>8</sup> oranges,<sup>9</sup> sugar-cane,<sup>10</sup> cotton<sup>11</sup> and saffron.<sup>12</sup> The south-eastern plains of the peninsula, especially favoured by climate and soil, developed important centres of rural and urban activity. Here wheat and other grains as well as olives and sundry fruits<sup>13</sup> were raised by a peasantry who worked the soil on shares with the owners.

This agricultural development was one of the glories of Moslem Spain and one of the Arabs' lasting gifts to the land, for Spanish gardens have preserved to this day a "Moorish" imprint. One <sup>1</sup> Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 102, 123-4.

' Lisán-al-Din ibn-al-Khatib, *al-Ihdtah fi Akhbár Gharnatah* (Cairo, 1319), vol. i, p. 15; *al-Lamhah al-Badriyah fi al-Dawlah al-Nayriyah*, ed. al-Khalib (Cairo, 1347), p. 13.

<sup>8</sup> For more on industry and metals consult ibn-Hawqal, pp. 78-9; I<sup>^</sup>Jakhn, p. 42; Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 90-92, 123.

<sup>4</sup> The Sp. word for canal is *acequia*, from Ar. *al-sáqiyah*.

- Sp. *arroz*, from Ar. *al-aruzz*, originally Skr. Cf. below, p. 665.

- Sp. albaricoque (whence Eng. apricot), from Ar. al-barqūq, which came from

L. through Gr.       <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sp. albérchigo, from Ar. firsiq, firsik, from L., a variety of peaches.

<sup>8</sup> Ar. rummán, which has survived in Sp. romanía, a drink made of pomegranate juice.

<sup>9</sup> See above, p. 351. The Arabs introduced into Europe the bitter, or Seville orange. The sweet, or common orange was introduced later by the Portuguese from India.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. below, p. 667.

<sup>11</sup> Sp. algodón, O.Sp. coton (whence Eng. cotton), from Ar. al-qufn.

<sup>12</sup> Sp. azafrán, Pg. a<sup>^</sup>ajrao, from Ar. al-za'Jarán.

<sup>13</sup> Ibn-al-Khatib, Iháiah, vol. i, pp. 14-15, 27, 37; Lamhah, p. 13; Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 94-6: ibn-Battüfah, vol. iv, pp. 366-9.

of the best-known gardens is the Generalife (from Ar. jannat al-arlf, the inspector's paradise), a Nasrid [12](#) monument of the late thirteenth century whose villa was one of the outlying buildings of the Alhambra. This garden, "proverbial for its extensive shades, falling waters and soft breeze", [13](#) was terraced in the form of an amphitheatre and irrigated by streams which, after forming numerous cascades, lost themselves among the flowers, shrubs and trees represented today by a few gigantic cypresses and myrtles.



The industrial and agricultural products of Moslem Spain Trade were more than sufficient for domestic consumption. Seville, one of the greatest of its river ports, exported cotton, olives and oil; it imported cloth and slaves from Egypt and singing girls from Europe and Asia. The exports of Malaga and Jaen included saffron, figs, marble and sugar. Through Alexandria and Constantinople Spanish products found markets as far away as India and Central Asia. Especially active was the trade with Damascus, Baghdad and Makkah. The international nautical vocabulary of the modern world contains not a few words, for example admiral, arsenal, average,<sup>14</sup> cable, corvette,<sup>15</sup> shallop (sloop),<sup>16</sup> tariff, which testify to the former Arab supremacy on the seas. An interesting echo of brisk maritime activity in the Atlantic, (bahr al-zulumdt, classical Mare Tenebrarum, the sea of darkness) is found in an obscure story preserved in al-Idrissi,<sup>17</sup> who tells of eight “beguiled” cousins who set off from Lisbon on an expedition of exploration which carried them after thirty-five days of sailing west and south to strange islands.<sup>7</sup>

The government maintained a regular postal service. It modelled its coinage on Eastern patterns, with the dinar as the gold unit and the dirham as the silver unit.<sup>8</sup> The copper fals<sup>9</sup> of early Islam was likewise current. Arab money was in use in the Christian kingdoms of the north, which for nearly four hundred years had no coinage other than Arabic or French.

The halo that surrounded the court of 'Abd-al-Rahman III The caliph did not cease to shed its lustre on that of his son and successor al-Hakam II al-Mustansir (961-76), considered by al-Mas'udi<sup>18</sup> the most judicious (ahkawi) of all men. Early in al-Hakam's reign there appeared at the Moslem capital Ordono the Wicked, seeking reinstatement in the Leonese

throne which he had lost through the intervention of 'Abd-al-Rahman. The ex-king was escorted to al-Zahra' by Walid ibn-Khayzuran, the Christian judge of Cordova, and 'Abdullah ibn-Qasim,<sup>19</sup> the metropolitan of Toledo, and instructed by them in the details of proper court etiquette. Dressed in white and wearing a head-gear adorned with jewels, Ordonez, at the head of his nobles, made his way through the serried ranks of Moslem soldiers lining the approaches to the imperial residence. Struck with awe, the Christians began to cross themselves. In the audience chamber sat the caliph on his throne with the members of his household and chief officers on both sides and behind. With abject genuflections the Christian prince advanced, bare-headed, kissed the hand of the commander of the believers, calling himself his slave, implored his aid and retired walking backwards to the door. The same procedure was observed by his noble companions. Walid acted as interpreter. The caliph promised aid under certain conditions, but the visit proved fruitless.<sup>20</sup>

### Educational activity

The real glory of this period, however, lies in fields other than political. Al-Hakam was himself a scholar and patronized learning.<sup>21</sup> He granted munificent bounties to scholars and established twenty-seven free schools in the capital.<sup>22</sup> Under him the university of Cordova, founded in the principal mosque by 'Abd-al-Rahman III, rose to a place of pre-eminence among the educational institutions of the world. It preceded both al-Azhar of Cairo and the Nizamiyah of Baghdad and attracted students, Christian and Moslem, not only from Spain but from other parts of Europe, Africa and Asia. Al-Hakam enlarged the mosque which housed the university, conducted water to it in lead pipes and decorated it with mosaics brought by Byzantine artists, spending on it 261,537 dinars and 11 dirhams.<sup>6</sup> He invited

professors from the East to the university and set aside endowments for their salaries. Among its professors were the historian, ibn-al-Qütîyah, who taught grammar, and the renowned philologist of Baghdad, abu-'Ali al-Qâli,<sup>1</sup> whose *Amali*\* (dictations) is still studied in Arabic lands. One of the dramatic episodes in the life of al-Qâli was the time he was struck with stage fright while delivering an extemporaneous oration at the pompous reception tendered the Byzantine envoys by the Caliph al-Nâsir. He could not proceed beyond the introductory praise to Allah and blessing on Muhammad, whereupon he was immediately replaced by Mundhir ibn-Sa'id, who "extemporaneously" delivered a most eloquent address, covering two pages and a half in al-Maqqari,<sup>3</sup> all in rhymed prose.

In addition to the university the capital housed a library of first magnitude. Al-Hakam was a bibliophile; his agents ransacked the bookshops of Alexandria, Damascus and Baghdad with a view to buying or copying manuscripts. The books thus gathered are said to have numbered 400,000, their titles filling a catalogue of forty-four volumes, in each one of which twenty sheets were devoted to poetical works alone.<sup>4</sup> Al-Hakam, probably the best scholar among Moslem caliphs, personally used several of these works; his marginal notes on certain manuscripts rendered them highly prized by later scholars. In order to secure the first copy of the *Aghâni*, which al-Isbahâni, a descendant of the Umayyads, was then composing in al-Trâq, al-Hakam sent the author a thousand dinars.<sup>5</sup> The general state of culture in Andalusia reached such a high level at this time that the distinguished Dutch scholar Dozy,<sup>6</sup> followed by other scholars, went so far as to declare enthusiastically that "nearly every one could read and write". All this whilst in Christian Europe only the rudiments of learning were known, and that by the few, mostly clergy.

Al-Hakam was succeeded by his son Hishâm II al-Mu'ayyad ^Amind (976-1009), a boy of twelve. Hishâm's mother, a beautiful and <sup>ship</sup> able Basque named Subh <sup>7</sup> (dawn, aurora), was the real power

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khallikân, vol. i, pp. 130-3L Yâqût, Jdaba , vol. ii, pp. 35<sup>1</sup>'4; Sam'am, fol. 439 b. <sup>2</sup> 2 vols. (Bûlâq, 1324). <sup>8</sup> Vol. 1, pp. 237-40.

<sup>4</sup> Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 249-50, 256; ibn-Khaldûn, vol. iv, p. 146.

<sup>5</sup> Ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, p. 146; Maqqari, vol. i, p. 250.

<sup>6</sup> Histoire des Musulmans, ed. Lévi-Provençal, vol. 11, p. 184; Nicholson Literary

History,?. 419; Rafael Altamira in The Cambridge Medieval History, (NewYork, 1922), vol. iii, p. 434-

» Ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, p. 268; Maqqari, vol. 1, p. 259; Marrakushi, pp. 17, 19.

in state affairs. The Sultanah had a protégé, Muhammad ibn-abi-'Amir, who started life as a humble professional letter writer and ultimately became virtual ruler of the kingdom. His career provides another illustration of what pluck, talent and ambition could accomplish in a Moslem state. Muhammad s ancestor, a Yamanite of the Ma\*afir tribe, was one of the few Arabs in Tariq's army of conquest. Under the patronage of the queen, who was said to have been also his mistress, young Muhammad rose from one office to another in the court, disposing, by clever manipulation or force, of superiors on whose shoulders he climbed until he became royal chamberlain (Jiâjib') and vizir.<sup>23</sup> In that

capacity he dealt a final blow to the Slavonic bodyguard, substituted for it a new unit of loyal Moroccan mercenaries and finally shut up the immature caliph in his palace. In order to set aside al-Zahra' the Hâjib built for himself in 978 a magnificent residence east of Cordova on a site not yet identified and styled it al-Madînah al-Zâhirah (the brilliant town).<sup>24</sup> To ingratiate himself with the ulema he burned all books in the library of al-Hakam dealing with philosophy and other subjects blacklisted by those theologians. The poets he handled properly through bounteous subsidies. He then had his name mentioned in the Friday prayer and on the coinage, wore robes of gold tissue woven with his name—a privilege of royalty— and after 992 had his seal replace the caliph's on all official documents issued from the chancellery.<sup>25</sup> The only thing he did not do was to overthrow the nominal Umayyad caliph and establish an 'Amirid caliphate.

In military affairs ibn-abi-'Amir proved as successful as in peaceful undertakings. He first reformed the army, substituting for the ancient tribal organization the regimental system. The removal of the Fâtimid seat of power farther east to the newly built Cairo (969) and the internecine conflicts among the petty Christian kingdoms of the north afforded his armies an opportunity to march triumphantly along the north-western African coast as well as in the northern parts of the Iberian Peninsula. His victories led him to assume in 981 the honorific title al-Mansür bi-Allâh (rendered victorious through the aid of Allah). In the spring and autumn of every year al-Hajib al-Mansur led his troops as a matter of course against the Christians of Leon, Castile and Catalonia. Here, among other achievements, he captured Zamora in 981, sacked Barcelona in his thirteenth campaign <sup>1</sup> (985) and in 988 razed the city of Leon with its massive walls and high

towers, making its kingdom a tributary province. He even ventured into the mountainous passes of Galicia and in 997 demolished the magnificent church of St. Jago (Santiago) de Compostela,<sup>2</sup> a shrine frequented by pilgrims from all of Christian Europe. Subsequent to this last feat his triumphal entry into Cordova was signalized by a multitude of Christian captives bearing on their shoulders the church doors, which were incorporated in the capital's great mosque, together with the church bells, which were utilized as lamps in Moslem edifices. Christians with chains round their ankles were employed by al-Mansur in repairing the mosque. Never except under 'Abd-al-Rahman III did the star of Spanish Islam shine with such brilliancy.

Al-Mansur's wish to die in the field was realized in 1002 on his way back from a campaign against Castile, the fiftieth of his expeditions.<sup>3</sup> Buried with him in the coffin was the dust which had accumulated on his coat of mail during his numerous campaigns and which he had kept for this purpose.<sup>4</sup> On his tomb at Medinaceli (Madinat Salim) was engraved this epitaph:

His story in his relics you may trace, As tho' he stood before you face to face. Never will Time bring forth his peer again, Nor one to guard, like him, the gaps of Spain.[26](#) [27](#) [28](#)

But the pointed comment of the monkish annalist better ex-

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-al-Khatib, Ihdtah, vol. ii, p. 7U according to others twenty-third campaign, 1 "Shant Yaqub" of Arab authors; ibn-Tdhari, vol. ii, pp. 316-19; Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 270-72; Idrisi, p. 104. Considered by Christians the burial place of the Apostle James, son of Zebedee, who, tradition asserts, introduced Christianity into Spain. The tomb was spared by al-Mansur.

' Ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, p. 148, makes his campaigns fifty-two, quoted fifty-six in Maqqari, vol. i, p. 258, cf. p. 261, l. 17; ibn-al-Khatib, Ihdtah, vol. 11, p. 69, l. 14; ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii, p. 498, l. 15; ibn-al-Abbar, Hullah, p. 149.

< Ibn-al-Khatib, Ihdtah, vol. ii, p. 72; ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, p. 125; Marrakushi,

presses the sentiment of the Christians: "In 1002 died Almanzor, and was buried in hell".<sup>1</sup>

### Collapse of Umayyad power

For eighty years after the death of the 'Amirid dictator the Andalus was torn asunder by Berbers, Arabs, Slavs (Saqalzbajt) and Spaniards, with the praetorian guard playing the same role as it did in ancient Rome and decadent Baghdad. His son 'Abd-al-Malik al-Muzaffar, whom al-Mansur had appointed as his successor, thus making the office hereditary, succeeded in maintaining the unity and prestige of the kingdom for six years.<sup>2</sup> In 1008 al-Muzaffar was poisoned by his brother and successor, \*Abd-al-Rahman, surnamed Shanjul (Sanchuelo, i.e. little Sancho, because his mother was daughter of King Sancho of Navarre), who immediately proclaimed himself heir presumptive to the Umayyad caliphate, a step which aroused the populace and resulted in his execution.<sup>3</sup> For twenty-one years after this, caliph after caliph was set up: one as a puppet of the Cordovans, another of the Slavs and a third of the Berbers. Even the Castilians had a share in unseating one caliph and seating another.<sup>4</sup> The real power was in the hands of the military. The unfortunate Hisham II was dragged out of his thirty years of seclusion but manifested only childish incompetence and was forced to abdicate in 1009 in favour of his second cousin Muhammad II al-Mahdi.<sup>29</sup> Muhammad's only claim to distinction

<sup>1</sup> "Chronicon Burgensi" in Espana sagrada, vol. xxiii, p. 308.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-'Idhari, ed. E. Levi-Provencal, vol. iii (Paris, 1930), pp. 3-4, 36-7; Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 276-7.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn 'Idhari, vol. iii, pp. 43-8, 66-74; ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, pp. 148-50; ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii, p. 499.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, pp. 150-51; ibn-al-Abbar, Hullah, pp. 159-60.

<sup>6</sup> Table showing genealogy of Umayyad caliphs in Cordova:

I. 'Abd-al-Rahman III (912 [caliph g2g]-6i)

2.

Al-Hakam II

(961-76)

('Abd-al-Jabbär) (Sulaymän) ('Abd-al-Malik) -

I I

(Hishäm) (al-Hakam) (Muhammad)

('Ubaydulläh) I ('Abd-al-Rahmän)

Hisham II 4. Muhammad II

(976-1009, (1009, 1010)

1010-13)

6. 'Abd-al-

Rahmän IV (1018)



## 7. \*Abd-al-Rahmān V (1023)

9. Hishām 8. Muham-

III mad III

(1027-31) (1023-5)

was that he held the throne for only a few months, in which he found time to raze the Madinah al-Zahirah of the 'Amirids<sup>1</sup> and have the severed heads of a number of leaders of the northern marches who refused to acknowledge him converted into flowerpots and placed on the banks of the river opposite his palace. His manufacture of wine in his palace won him the sobriquet nabbadh<sub>y</sub> wine-maker.<sup>2</sup> Three of the nine Umayyad caliphs in this period of anarchy held the throne more than once; one of them, Hisham II, was set up and pulled down twice, after which he disappeared in a mysterious way that has never been solved. An impostor bearing close resemblance to him was installed in Seville.<sup>3</sup> One poor wretch, 'Abd-al-Rahman V al-Mustazhir (1023), the best of the lot and whose vizir was the learned ibn-Hazm, hid himself in the bathroom heater, whence he was dragged and butchered before the eyes of his successor, Muhammad III al-Mustakfi,<sup>4</sup> who two years later was to meet as hard a fate. In 1025 as al-Mustakfi, "whose interest in life centred in sex and stomach",<sup>5</sup> sought flight in the guise of a singing girl wearing a veil, he fell victim, in an obscure village on the frontier, to poison administered by one of his officers.<sup>6</sup> A daughter of this caliph was the poetess Walladah, whose beauty and talent made her the chief centre of attraction in the court and won h'er undying fame.

Before coming to its inglorious end the Umayyad caliphate was interrupted by another regime, the Hammudid,

which claimed all caliphal privileges. The founder was one ʿAli ibn-Hammud (1016-18), who traced his descent from his namesake the Prophet's son-in-law, but was himself half Berberized. ʿAli had held the governorship of Ceuta and Tangier before proclaiming himself caliph in Cordova. He had also conquered Malaga, where his eight descendants maintained themselves from 1025 to 1057? Two other Hammudid pretenders to the

<sup>1</sup> Nuwayri, ed. Gaspar Remiro, vol. i, p. 74.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii, p. 500.  
below, p. 538.

<sup>3</sup> See

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-'Idhari, vol. iii, pp. 138-9; Nuwayri, vol. i, p. 78; ibn-al-Abbar, Ijullah., p. 164; ibn-Bassam, al-Dhakhirah Ji Mahasin Ahl al-Jazirah, pt. I, vol. i (Cairo\* 1939), P- 39

<sup>6</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, p. 194.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn-'Idhari, vol. iii, p. 142; ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, p. 194; Marrakushi, p. 40;

Nuwayri, vol. i, p. 84.

<sup>7</sup> Marrakushi, pp. 30-37; ibn-'Idhari, vol iii, pp. 113-117; Maqqari, vol. 1, pp. 281-2; ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, pp. 152-5; ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, pp. 188 seq.  
The Uammudids were related to the Idrisids of Morocco.

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caliphate followed, exercising precarious power in Cordova until 1027.<sup>1</sup>

In this year Hisham III al-Mu'tadd recaptured the throne for the Umayyads. But the fifty-four-year-old monarch was no match for the troublous situation. Tired of the endless changes in their government the Cordovans at last decided to take a radical step and abolish the caliphate altogether. Hisham was shut up with his family in a dismal vault attached to the great mosque. Here in total darkness and half frozen in his scanty attire the wretched sovereign, almost suffocating with the foul air, sat for hours trying to warm on his bosom his infant daughter, whom he dearly loved. In the meantime the vizirs were holding a public meeting which proclaimed the abolition of the caliphate for ever and the rule of a council of state under the leadership of one abu-al-Hazm ibn-Jahwar. Hisham met the epoch-making announcement by begging for a light and a morsel of bread for his starving child.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-'Idhari, vol. iii, pp. 124-35.

(Hammud)

I 'Ali (1016-18)

## 2. Al-Qāsim (1018–21, 1022–5)

3. Yahya (1021, 1025-7)

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-'Idhari, vol. iii, pp. 150-52; Maqqari, vol. i, p. 286; ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, pp., 152-3; ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, pp. 198-9; Marrakushi, p. 41.

## CHAPTER XXXIX

### PETTY STATES: FALL OF GRANADA

FROM the ruins of the Umayyad caliphate there emerged an apparently fortuitous conglomeration of petty states which spent themselves in fratricidal quarrels and, after falling in part a prey to two Moroccan Berber dynasties, succumbed one after the other to the rising Christian power of the north. In the first half of the eleventh century no less than twenty such short-lived states arose in as many towns or provinces under chieftains and kinglets called by the Arabs *mulük al-tawaif* (Sp. *reyes de taifas*, party kings).

In Cordova the Jahwarids headed a sort of republic which was in 1068 absorbed by the *banu-'Abbad* of Seville.<sup>1</sup> Henceforth primacy among Moslem states lay with Seville, whose fortunes were always closely linked with Cordova's. Granada was the seat of a Zirid regime, which received its name from its Berber founder *ibn-Ziri* (1012-19) and was destroyed by the Moroccan *Murâbits* in 1090. This was the only Spanish Moslem town in which a Jew, the Vizir *Ismâ'il ibn-Naghzâlah*<sup>2</sup> (f 1055), ever exercised virtually supreme power. At Malaga and in neighbouring districts the *Hammüdid* dynasty,<sup>3</sup> whose founder and his first two successors ruled as caliphs over Cordova too, lasted until 1057. After passing through Zirid hands Malaga finally came within the orbit of *Murâbit* power.<sup>4</sup> The thronelet of Toledo was occupied by the *banu-dhu-al-Nûn* (1032<sup>5</sup>-85), an ancient Berber family which had often been in rebellion, until destroyed by Alfonso VI of Leon and Castile.<sup>6</sup> In Saragossa the *banu-Hüd* held the sovereignty from 1039 until overpowered

<sup>1</sup> Marrâkushi, pp. 50-51.

<sup>8</sup> *Naghzâlah*, Heb. Samuel ben-Nagdela. *Ibn-Tdhâri*, vol. iii, pp. 261, 264.

<sup>8</sup> The noted geographer al-Sharif al-Idrisi was a grandson of Idris II (1042-6, 1053-4), the last save one of this line.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Tdhâri, vol. iii, pp. 262-6; ibn-Khaldün, vol. iv, pp. 160-61.

<sup>6</sup> E. Lévi-Provençal, *Inscriptions arabes cT Espagne* (Leyden, 1931), pp. 65-6.

<sup>6</sup> Maqqari, vol. i, p. 288; ibn-Khaldün, vol. iv, p. 161; ibn-Tdhâri, vol. iii, pp. 276-85; ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, p. 203.

538 THE ARABS IN EUROPE: SPAIN AND SICILY part iv by the Christians in 1141.<sup>1</sup> Among these party kings the cultured house of the 'Abbâdids in Seville was undoubtedly the most powerful.<sup>2</sup>

The

'Abbâdids of Seville

The banu-'Abbâd (1023-91) claimed descent from the ancient Lakhmid kings of al-Hīrah. Their Spanish ancestor came as an officer in the Hirns regiment of the Syrian army shortly after the conquest<sup>3</sup> and the dynasty started in the person of a shrewd qâdi of Seville who used as his cat's-paw someone who closely resembled the vanished Hishâm II.<sup>4</sup> In 1042 the qâdi's son 'Abbad succeeded his father as chamberlain to the pretended caliph, the pseudo-Hishâm, but lost no time in throwing off the mask and openly reigning under the honorific title al-Mu tadid<sup>5</sup> (he who seeks strength [from Allah]), thus putting an end to the farce perpetrated by his father.

Al-

## Mu'tamid

Al-Mu'tadid was a poet and patron of letters who improvised elegant ditties with his boon companions and enjoyed a harem of nearly eight hundred inmates. But his court was eclipsed by that of his son and successor al-Mu'tamid (he who relies [upon Allah], 1068-91), "the most munificent, the most popular and most powerful of all party kings".<sup>6</sup> Shortly after his accession al-Mu'tamid succeeded in destroying the banu-Jahwar régime and in uniting Cordova to his kingdom. Like many of his contemporaries, however, he was tributary to a Christian monarch, first to Garcia, King of Galicia, and then to his successor, Alfonso VI.<sup>7</sup> Al-Mu'tamid possessed a sensitive and poetical soul. Numerous are the anecdotes told of his life of luxury, his gay parties and his romantic adventures in disguise. He "whose court was the halting-place of sojourners, the rendezvous of poets, the direction toward which all hopes were turned and the haunt of men of excellence"<sup>3</sup> chose as vizir

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-'Idhari, vol. iii, pp. 221-9; ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, pp. 163-4; ibn-al-Athir,

<sup>2</sup> Forenames and dates of rulers in these minor dynasties consult Lane-Poole,

• Ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, p. 412. Cf. the eulogy of al-Fath ibn-Khaqan, Qala id al- Iqyan (Bulaq, 1283), pp. 4-5-

a poet, ibn-'Ammar,<sup>1</sup> and as favourite wife a slave girl of talent and beauty, Ttimad. While strolling one evening with ibn-'Ammar along the banks of the Guadalquivir, the monarch observed a gentle breeze ruffling the face of the water and improvised this hemistich, challenging his vizir to complete the verse:

Behold the wind weaving the waves into mail;

Ibn-<sup>C</sup>Ammar hesitated. Meanwhile a young woman who happened to be washing clothes near by instantly supplied the antiphony:

Oh, were it but frozen—no knight would it fail! <sup>2</sup>

That was the youthful Ttimad al-Rumayklyah, the future queen, from whose first name her royal husband is said to have adapted his own<sup>3</sup> and whose every whim and fancy he later tried to satisfy. Impressed on one occasion by the rare spectacle of snowflakes falling in Cordova, Ttimad implored al-Mu'tamid for a substitute, and forthwith he ordered the Sierra planted with almonds, whose white flowers bloom in the latter part of winter. Noticing on another day some Bedouin dairy women carrying their jars and walking in the muddy streets with their skirts lifted up, she expressed the wish to imitate their performance; in no time the courtyard of the royal palace was converted into a pool filled with spices and perfumed essences, all moistened with rose-water and made into an aromatic quagmire ready for the delicate feet of Ttimad and her pretty attendants.<sup>4</sup>

The last days of al-Mu'tamid were as miserable as his early days were gay. After a lull of several years in which the Christian monarchs of the north had occupied themselves with internal troubles, they were again bestirring themselves against their Moslem neighbours. The kingdoms of Leon and Castile, united under Ferdinand I and his son Alfonso VI, became especially dangerous. Alfonso added to his kingdom Galicia and Navarre, and as Moslem princes vied with the Christian in winning his favour he styled himself "the emperor" like his successor

<sup>1</sup> Marrakushi, pp. 77, 85-90.

<sup>2</sup> Dozy, *Scriptorium Arabum* oci de Abbadidis, vol. ii (Leyden, 1852), pp. 151'2, vol. iii (Leyden, 1863), p. 225.

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-al-Khatib, *I hat ah*, vol. ii, p. 74. Her surname she acquired from her first master, Rumayk. \* Dozy, *Scriptorium*, vol. ii, pp. 15<sup>2</sup>"3> Maqqari, vol. i, p. 287.

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Alfonso VII, who, in addition to that, claimed to be "king of the men of the tWo religions". Raids from the north now became regular and reached as far south as Cadiz. In the meantime Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar, "My Cid the Challenger", had established himself with his Castilian followers in Valencia and began to harass the 'Abbadid domain. As a measure of protection against his suzerain Alfonso VI and the Cid, al-Mu tamid at this time committed the fatal error of inviting as an ally from Morocco the powerful leader of the Murâbits, Yusuf ibn-Tâshfin.<sup>1</sup> To his critics who foresaw the danger and warned him of the impossibility of "sheathing two swords in one scabbard", al-Mu'tamid replied that he would rather be a camel-driver in Africa than a swineherd in Castile.<sup>2</sup> These Berber Murâbits, in whose veins some negro blood flowed, were now in power from Algiers to Senegal.

Yūsuf accepted the invitation. He marched unopposed through southern Spain, met Alfonso VI at al-Zallâqah,<sup>3</sup> near Badajoz, and with about twenty thousand men inflicted on him, October 23, 1086, a humiliating defeat. The Christian monarch and but three hundred of his horse barely escaped with their lives, leaving enough dead to form a tower of heads which was used as a minaret by the rejoicing Moslems.<sup>4</sup> The Berber chief shipped some forty thousand heads across the straits as a trophy. A wave of enthusiasm spread over Moslem Spain, and the proud ibn-Tâshfin, who



could not understand the flowery eulogies of the Sevillian poets, returned to Africa in accordance with his previous promise. Not long afterwards, however, the Murâbit chief, who with his Saharan hordes had tasted enough of the delicacies of civilized Spain to whet their appetites for more and render the barrenness of the desert more distasteful than ever before, came back, but this time as a conqueror rather than ally. In November 1090 he entered Granada; in the following year he took Seville and other leading towns. The whole of Moslem Spain was annexed with the exception of Toledo, which remained in Christian hands, and Saragossa, where the banu-Hûd were

<sup>1</sup> For the letter of invitation see Maqqari, vol. ii, p. 674. .

« Maqqari, vol. ii, p. 678; Dozy, *Scrip tor um*, vol. ii, p. 8; Koran 2 : 168.

' Sacralias, modern Sagrâjas. See Marrâkushi, pp. 93-4; ibn-Khaldûn, vol. vi, pp. 186-7; tr. de Slane, *Berbères*, vol. ii, pp. 78-9; ibn-Khallikân, vol. ii, p. 415; ibn-al-Athir, vol. x, pp. 101-2; ibn-abi-Zar\*, *Rawd al-Qtrfas*, vol. i, pp. 93 seq.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-al-Khatib, *al-Hulal al-Mawshiyah fi Dhikr al-Akhbar al-Marrokushvyah*. (Tunis, 1329), p. 43, estimates the number of Christian victims at 300,000.

allowed to subsist. Al-Mu'tamid was sent to Morocco, where he lived in chains and utter destitution, sharing his exile with T timad and his daughters, who spent their time spinning to earn a living.<sup>1</sup> One day the fallen monarch noticed a procession going to the mosque to pray for rain and the old poet in him, still alive, improvised these pathetic lines:

And forth they went imploring God for rain;

“My tears,” I said, “could serve you for a flood.” “In truth,” they cried, “your tears might well contain Sufficiency; but they are dyed with blood.”<sup>2</sup>

In 1095 this last of the 'Abbáids died in Aghrnat. The period of Berber hegemony in Spain had begun.

The

The Murábits (Almorávides) were originally a religious Murabits military brotherhood established in the middle of the eleventh century by a pious Moslem in a ribát (whence Murábit),<sup>3</sup> fortified monastery, on an island in the lower Senegal. The first recruits were mainly from the Lamtūnah, a branch of the Sanhájah tribe, whose members lived as nomads in the vast wastes of the Sahara and, as their descendants the Tawáriq (Touaregs) of south Algeria still do to the present day, wore veils covering the face below the eyes. This strange custom<sup>4</sup> among their men gave rise to the other name Mulaththamūn (veilwearers), sometimes given to the Murábits. Starting with about a thousand warrior “monks”, the Murábits forced one tribe after another, including some negro tribes, to accept Islam and in a few years established themselves as masters of all north-western Africa and finally of Spain.<sup>5</sup> Their story serves as another illustration in Islam of what can be produced by the marriage of the sword to religion.<sup>6</sup>

Yūsuf ibn-Táshfin (reigned 1061-1106), one of the builders of the Murábit empire, founded in 1062 the city of Marrákush (Morocco, Marrakesh), which became his and his successors' capital.<sup>7</sup> In Spain Seville, instead of Cordova, functioned as a

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, p. 419; ibn-Kháqán, p. 25; ibn-al-Khatib, I hat ah, vol. ii, p. 83; Dozy, Scriptorum, vol. i,

pp. 63-4, vol. ii, p. 151.

<sup>2</sup> Dozy, *Scriptorum*, vol. i, p. 383.

<sup>8</sup> Fr. marabout devotee, is a corruption of this word.

<sup>4</sup> Consult ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix. pp. 428-9; ibn-al-Khatib, *Hulal*, p. 10.

\* The Berber tribe of Dalim in Morocco claims descent from al-Murabits.

• Ibn-abi-Zar', vol. i, pp. 75-87; ibn-Khaldün, vol. vi, pp. 181-2; ibn-al-Athir, vol. ix, pp. 425-7.

' Ibn abi-Zar', vol. i, pp. 88-9; ibn-Khaldün, vol. vi, p. 184= de Slane, vol. ii, p. 73.

subsidiary capital. The Murâbit sovereigns reserved for themselves all temporal power and bore the title amîr al-Muslimîn,<sup>1</sup> but in matters spiritual acknowledged the supreme authority of the Âbbâsid caliph in Baghdad,<sup>2</sup> an authority which had been discarded at the advent of the Umayyad régime. For more than half a century the Murâbit power was supreme in north-western Africa and southern Spain. For the first time in history a Berber people was playing a leading rôle on the world's stage.

Coinage

Persecution

The later Murâbit dinar bore the title amir al-Muslimîn on the obverse, with a reference to the 'Abbâsid caliph preceded by the title imam on the reverse. King Alfonso VIII of Leon and Castile (1158-1214) imitated it, retaining its Arabic inscription but adapting its legend to the Christian formulas.

On it he appeared as amīr al-Qatūlaqīn (the commander of the Catholics) and the pope in Rome as the imam al-bz ah al-Masīhiyah (the leader of the Christian Church). The coin was issued “in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, one only God” in place of the corresponding Moslem formula, and “whosoever believeth and is baptized shall be saved” stood in place of the denunciation of those who refused to accept Islam.

Under the Murâbits, fresh converts to Islam and heirs to a barbarian legacy not yet dead, an outburst of religious fervour on the part of theological zealots resulted at the beginning of the twelfth century in suffering for many Christians, Jews and even liberal Moslems. Under the devout 'Ali (1106-43), Yūsuf's son and successor, al-Ghazzâli's works were put on the black list or committed to the flames in Spain and al-Maghrib,<sup>3</sup> because of remarks considered derogatory to theologians (Jaqihs), including those of the Mâlikite school of jurisprudence favoured by the Murâbits. Al-Ghazzâli, however, had headed the list of Eastern divines who expressed unreservedly their approval of the Andalusian faqīhs' legal opinion that Yūsuf ibn-Tâshfīn was absolved from any pledges he had made to the party kings of Moslem Spain and that it was not only his right but his duty to dethrone them.<sup>4</sup> At Lucena, termed by al-Idrisi<sup>5</sup> a Jewish city, the inhabitants, who were the wealthiest of their coreligionists in the Moslem world, were called upon by the

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-abi-Zar', vol. i, pp. 88, 96 ibn-Khaldūn, vol. vi, p. 188.

\* Marrâkushi, p. 64.  
vol. i, pp. 28-38.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 123; see Ihya ,

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Khaldūn, vol. vi, p. 187.

- šifat al-Alaghrib, ed. Dozy and de Goeje (Leyden, 1866), p. 205. founder of the Muräbit power in Spain to meet out of their pockets the deficit in the public treasury. Under the Umayyads the legal status of the Spanish Jews had greatly improved over that of Visigothic days and their number had increased. During the caliphate of 'Abd-al-Rahman III and his son al-Hakam, under the influence of whose treasurer Hasdäy ben-Shaprüt many Jews came from the East, Cordova became the centre of a talmudic school whose foundation marks the beginning of the flowering of Andalusian Jewish culture.<sup>1</sup> The Spanish Jews used the language and dress of the Arabs and followed the same manners.

The Mozarabs, that element in the population of Spain The which had assimilated itself in language and ways of living to would-be the conquering Moslems but retained its Christian faith, had assumed by this time large proportions and therefore became the special object of restrictions. In the large cities these Arabic-ized Christians lived in quarters of their own, kept under the Umayyads their special magistrates<sup>2</sup> and wore no distinctive clothes. Usually they bore double names: one Arabic and familiar, the other Latin or Spanish and more formal. They even practised circumcision and kept harems. Most of the Mozarabs were bilingual, their native tongue being the Romance patois derived from Low Latin and destined to become Spanish. In such cities as Toledo they continued in the use of Arabic as the written language of law and business for two centuries after the Christian conquest by Alfonso VI in 1085.<sup>3</sup> This Alfonso, like several of his successors, stamped his coins with Arabic characters. One of the early kings of Aragon, Peter I (f 1104), could write only in Arabic script. Even when writing Latin the Mozarabs used Arabic letters.

Not long after the Moslem conquest parts of the Bible were apparently translated into Arabic,<sup>4</sup> and in 946 Isaak Velasquez of Cordova translated Luke and presumably the other three Gospels from Latin.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. ii, p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> The two chief officials were called in Arabic qūmis (L. comes, Sp. conde) and qādi al-Nasāra (the judge of the Christians).

<sup>3</sup> For some of their writings consult Angel González Palencia, *Los Mozárabes de Toledo en los siglos XII y XIII*, 4 vols. (Madrid, 1926-30).

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 516.

<sup>8</sup> Georg Graf, *Die Christlich-arabische Literatur bis zur fränkischen Zeit* (Freiburg in Breisgau, 1905), p. 27.

On a fatwa (religious opinion) from his theologians Yūsuf in 1099 ordered a beautiful church, built in the Visigothic age and now possessed by the Mozarabs of Granada, to be levelled to the ground. These same Granadans in 1126 were put to the sword or banished to Morocco because they had entered into communication with a Christian sovereign of the north. Eleven years later a second expulsion of Mozarabs left few of them in Spain.

Racially the line of demarcation between Mozarabs and Moslems in the urban communities was at this time hard to draw. From the beginning, as we have noted before, the real Arabians in the army of conquest and among the colonists were comparatively few, limited to those in command and in high office. The number of women accompanying the army and first immigrants was

necessarily small. Disease and fighting decimated the early conquerors and settlers. After the fourth generation the Arabian blood must have become greatly diluted by intermarriage with native women. Concubines, slaves and prisoners of war helped the process of amalgamation, as in other conquered lands. The researches of Ribera<sup>30</sup> have shown that even the Moslems of Spain, the so-called Moors, were overwhelmingly of Spanish blood. In the opinion of this modern Spanish scholar the veins of Hishám II, the third Umayyad caliph, could not have contained more than a thousandth part of Arabian blood.

My Cid It was in the early Murábit period that the most colourful of <sup>the</sup> Mozarabs and at the same time most celebrated of the heroes

Challenger of Spanish chivalry, Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar, better known as the Cid,<sup>31</sup> carried on his military exploits. A descendant of a noble Castilian family, Rodrigo entered first the service of Alfonso VI but was later (1081) banished by him from the Castilian dominions. He then entered upon a knightly career espousing now the cause of this faction, now that of another and fighting Moslems or co-religionists as the occasion arose. In his behaviour he was almost as much Moslem as Christian. While in the service of the Huidid dynasty at Saragossa, Rodrigo covered himself with glory and won from his Moslem soldiers the title el Cid Campeador.<sup>1</sup> The crowning achievement of My Cid the Challenger was his occupation in 1094 of Valencia, which he held in defiance of the Murabit attacks until his death in 1099. In romance the Cid has lived as the national hero of Spain, the exemplar of its chivalry and its champion against the infidel. Spanish ballads surrounded his name with a saintly aureole of virtue; Philip II (f 1598) even presented it to the pope for canonization. The epic Cantar de

mio Cid woven around the Cid's name in the middle of the twelfth century is one of the grandest and oldest of Spanish poems, one that deeply influenced Spanish thought throughout subsequent ages and contributed powerfully to the establishment of the native language and the consolidation of the national character.

The Murabit dynasty in Spain (1090-1147),<sup>2</sup> as was to be Collapse expected, was short-lived. It fulfilled the fated cycle of Asiatic and African monarchies with rapidity: a generation of efficient militarism followed by sloth and corruption leading to disintegration and fall. Its rough Berbers, raised on the privations of desert life and suddenly transported to the luxurious regions of Morocco and Andalusia, soon succumbed to the vices of civilization and became enervated, even effeminate. They entered Spain at a time when intellectual pleasures among the Arabs had long since replaced the love of war and thirst for conquest. This gave the African conquerors their opportunity for settling in the land and at the same time proved their undoing, since it gave them contact with a refined civilization for the assimilation of which they were in nowise prepared. In turn they fell an easy prey to their more vigorous kinsmen the Muwahhids. Throughout the twelfth century and well into the first half of the thirteenth Spain

<sup>1</sup> Sp. equivalent of Ar. mubariz, champion. See above, pp. 88, 173. In Ar Campeador was rendered al-Kanbitur; ibn-Bassam, "al-Dhakhirah", in Dozy, Recherches, vol. ii, pp. v, ix; al-Qanbitur, in ibn-Tdhari, vol. iii, pp. 305-6 (supplement). Cf. Maqqari, vol. ii, p. 754.

\* (Tashfin)



1. Yusuf (1090-1106)

|

2. \*Ali (1106-43)

3. Tashfin (1143-6)

|

5. Ishaq (1146-7)

4. Ibrahim (1146)

The Muwah-hids

Founder of the Muwahhid dynasty

was under the successive rule of these two Berber dynasties, whose seat was Morocco.

As in the case of the Murábit, the Muwahhid dynasty had its inception in a politico-religious movement founded by a Berber. This was Muhammad ibn-Tūmart (ca. 1050-1130) of the Masmūdah tribe.<sup>1</sup> Muhammad assumed the symbolic title of al-Mahdi<sup>2</sup> and proclaimed himself the prophet sent to restore Islam to its pure and original orthodoxy. He preached among his own and other wild tribes of the Moroccan Atlas the doctrine of tawhid, the unity of God and the spiritual conception of Him, as a protest against the excessive anthropomorphism then prevalent in Islam. Accordingly his followers were called al-Muwahhidūn.<sup>3</sup> Small, ugly and misshapen, this son of a mosque lamplighter lived the life of an ascetic, and opposed music, drinking and other manifestations of laxity. When a young man, his zeal led him to assault in the streets of Fas (Fez) a sister of the reigning Murábit 'Ali ibn-Yusuf because she went unveiled.<sup>4</sup>

In 1130 ibn-Tūmart was succeeded by his friend and general 'Abd-al-Mu'min ibn-'Ali, son of a potter of the Zanátah tribe, who became the caliph-founder of the Muwahhid dynasty, the greatest Morocco ever knew, and of an empire second to none in the annals of Africa. In accordance with the doctrine that theirs was the only community of true believers, these Unitarian Moslems now carried fire and sword throughout Morocco and adjacent lands. In 1144-1146 'Abd-al-Mu'min annihilated the Murábit army near Tilimsán (Tlemcen), which he captured together with Fás, Ceuta, Tangier and Aghmát, and after an eleven-month siege of Marrákush in 1146-1147 he put an end to the Murábit dynasty.<sup>5</sup> The last of the Murábit line, a boy named Isháq ibn-'Ali, grandson of the founder of the empire, was executed by the Muwahhid caliph (amir al-mu minin') in spite of his childish tears.<sup>6</sup> Marrakesh now became the Muwahhid capital. In 1145 'Abd-al-Mu'min had dispatched into Spain,

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khaldūn, vol. vi, p. 225; ibn-al-Athir, vol. x, p. 400. Cf. Marrákushi, p. 128; ibn-abi-Zar', vol. i, p. no; ibn-Khallikán, vol. ii, p. 426.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-al-Khatib, Hulal, p. 78; Kitab Muhammad ibn-Tūmart, ed. I. Goldziher

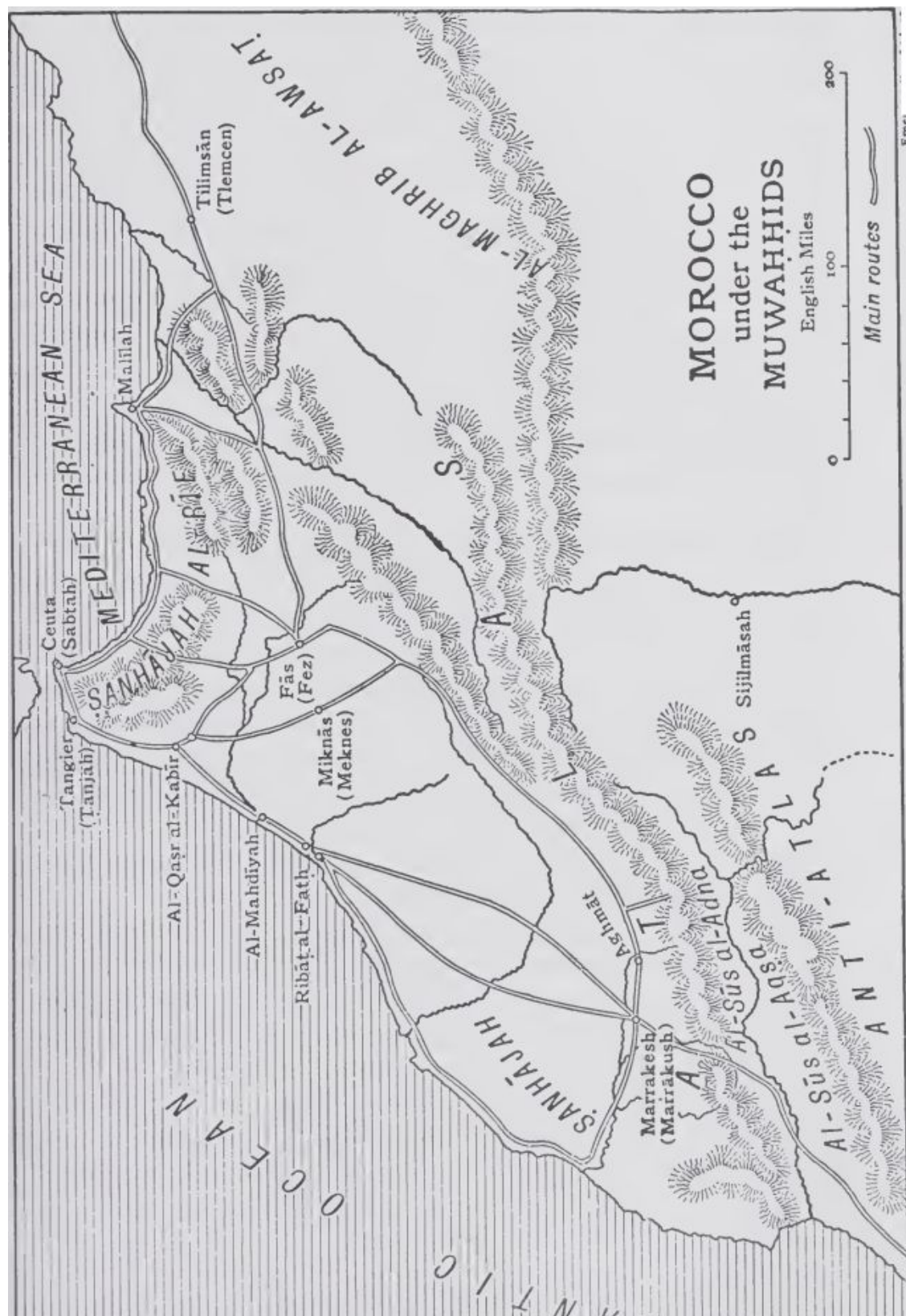
(Algiers, 1903), pp. 2-3.  
into Sp. Almohades.

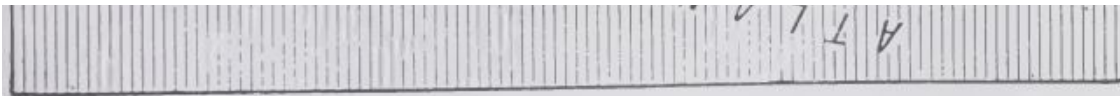
<sup>3</sup> The Unitarians, corrupted

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Khaldūn, vol. vi, p. 228. Cf. ibn-Khallikán, vol. ii, p. 431.

<sup>5</sup> Marrákushi, pp. 145-6; ibn-Khallikán, vol. i, p. 557; ibn-abi-Dinár, al-Munis fi Akhbár Ijrlqiyah iva-Tūnis (Tunis, 1286), p. 120.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. x, pp. 412-13.





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548 THE ARABS IN EUROPE: SPAIN AND SICILY part iv where political corruption, brigandage and dissatisfaction were rife, an army which in the course of five years reduced the whole Moslem part of the peninsula. The Balearic Isles, attached to the Umayyad amlrate since 9<sup>3</sup>, alone remained for a few more years in the hands of the last representatives of the Murabits.

Master of Morocco and Spain, ‘Abd-al-Mu’min pushed his conquests in 1152 to Algeria, in 1158 to Tunisia and in 1160 to Tripoli. Thus for the first time in Moslem history the whole coast from the Atlantic to the frontier of Egypt became united with Andalusia as an independent empire. The Murabit empire, on the other hand, had included, besides Spain, only Morocco and part of Algeria. From every pulpit in this immense new empire Friday prayers were read in the name of the Mahdi or his caliph instead of in that of the ‘Abbasid caliph as heretofore.<sup>1</sup>

Al-

Man?ùr

After a long and glorious reign \*Abd-al-Mu min died in 1163. Among the greatest and best known of his successors was his grandson abu-Yusuf Ya’qub al-Mansur (1184-99), who, like many other Berber rulers, was the son of a Christian slave. It was to al-Mansur’s court that Salah-al-Din (Saladin) sent with valuable presents an embassy headed by a nephew of Usamah ibn-Munqidh. Salah-al-Din, who

recognized the 'Abbasid caliph, accredited the embassy to amir al-Muslimiv^ instead of amir al-muminln, which at first made al-Mansur hesitate to act. Later, however, he is said to have dispatched 180 vessels to assist the Moslems against the Crusaders.<sup>3</sup>

The existing architectural monuments of al-Mansur are among the most remarkable in either Morocco or Spain. In Seville, to which the Muwahhids transferred their capital in 1170,<sup>4</sup> his accession was marked by the erection of the tower, now known as the Giralda, in connection with the great mosque. This mosque, begun in 1172 and completed in 1195, is now superseded by the cathedral. In Morocco he built Ribat al-Fath, modelled on Alexandria,<sup>5</sup> and in Marrakesh he built a hospital which his contemporary al-Marrakushi<sup>6</sup> thought had no equal in the world.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a Muwahhid khutbah see Marrakushi, pp. 250-51.

\* Marrakushi, p. 189; ibn-abi-Zar\*, vol. i, p. 142; ibn-abi-Dinar, pp. 116-17.

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. iii, p. 381; ibn-Khaldun, vol. vi, p. 246.

\* Maqqari, vol. ii, p. 693«      <sup>6</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. iii, p. 379-      \* P- 209»

' For his other buildings see ibn-abi-Zar\*, vol. i, pp. 143' 15<sup>1</sup>2.\_

The chief anxiety of the Muwahhid caliphs in Spain was the prosecution of the holy war, but they were not particularly successful. The disastrous defeat at Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212 resulted in their expulsion from the peninsula. This battle, called by the Arabs that of al-'Uqâb (hill), was fought about seventy miles east of Cordova. The

Christian army, in which Aragon was represented by its king, Navarre by its king and Portugal by a contingent of Templars and other knights, was led by Alfonso VIII of Castile, whose own forces included French Crusaders. The Caliph Muhammad al-Nâsir (1199-1214), son of al-Mansur, led the Arab troops, of which only one thousand out of "600,000" escaped.<sup>1</sup> Al-Nâsir fled to Marrâkush, where he died two years later. The overthrow of the Muwahhid regime in Spain was complete. All Moslem Spain lay at the feet of the conquerors. Gradually it was parcelled out among the ever-encroaching Christian sovereigns and local Moslem dynasts. Among the latter the Nasrids of Granada formed the most conspicuous group and proved the last representative of Moslem authority in the peninsula.

In Morocco al-Nasir's successors, nine in number and all descendants of 'Abd-al-Mu'min,<sup>2</sup> lasted until their capital Marrakesh was captured in 1269 by the semi-nomadic Berber tribe of banu-Marin, a branch of the Zanâtah.<sup>3</sup>

The founder of the Nasrid dynasty (1232-1492), which traces Banu-its descent to the eminent Khazraj tribe of al-Madînah, was <sup>Na?r</sup> Muhammad ibn-Yusuf ibn-Nasr, commonly known as ibn-al-Ahmar. Hence the other name of the family, banu-al-Ahmar. Ibn-Khaldûn,<sup>4</sup> who resided for a time at Granada and was attached to the court of one of ibn-al-Ahmar's successors, gives us a detailed account of the career of Muhammad. After the collapse of the Muwahhid regime, as the Castilians were setting one Moslem chieftain against another and destroying each in turn, Muhammad entered into alliance with the Christians and contrived to carve for himself a state around Granada which to

<sup>1</sup> Maqqari, vol. ii, p. 696. Cf. Marrâkushi, p. 236; ibn-abi-Zar', vol. i, p. 159. A contemporary English chronicler

claims that al-Nâsir received in 1213 from King John, of Magna Charta fame and brother of Cœur de Lion, an embassy offering to hold England under tribute to him and to exchange the Christian faith for Islam.

<sup>2</sup> For lists consult al-Zarkashi, *Ta'rikh al-Dawlatayn al-Muivahhidiyah w-al\* Hafstyah* (Tunis, 1289); Lane-Poole. *Dynasties*, pp. 47-8; de Zambaur, pp. 73, 74.

\* *ILn-aLi-Zar'*, vol. i, pp. 174-5, 184

<sup>4</sup> Vol. iv, pp. 170-72. See also ibn-al-Khatib, *Lamhah*, pp. 30 sea.

a limited extent revived and continued the glories of Seville and for the next two and a half centuries acted as the champion of Islam in its defensive struggle against the rising power of Christianity.

Muhammad (1232-73) assumed the title of al-Ghalib (the overcomer) and chose Granada for his seat of government. He as well as his successors paid homage and tribute to the Castilian crown. By the Arabs Granada (*Gharnátah*), than which no city in Andalusia was more favoured in site and climate,<sup>32</sup> was likened to Damascus, and in it many Syrians and Jews had settled.<sup>33</sup> Its plain (*marf*), the Vega, fed by abundant streams, presented a rare spectacle of perpetual verdure and beauty, and corresponded to the *Ghūtah* of Damascus.<sup>34</sup> At the close of the Nasrid period it housed about half a million within its walls. Lisan-al-Din ibn-al-Khatib (f 1374), the hero of al-Maqqari, vizir at the Nasrid court and literary historian of the dynasty, has left us a number of monographs on the sovereigns and savants of Granada which supply us with interesting details about the capital.

## Alhambra

On a hilly terrace on the south-east border of this beautiful city al-Ghalib built on the remains of an earlier Umayyad citadel his world-renowned castle called al-Hamra\* (Sp. Alhambra), the red one, from the red stucco used in its construction and not from his personal nickname as formerly supposed. Enlarged and further embellished by three of his successors, the Alhambra became one of the architectural monuments of Spain. Standing sentinel over the surrounding plain, like the Acropolis of Athens, this citadel-palace, with its superb decorations and arabesque mouldings, still excites universal admiration. In it the Nasrids maintained a court which revived for a time the glory of Moslem Spain in Umayyad and 'Abbadid days. Their patronage of art and learning attracted many scholars, especially from North Africa. Their encouragement of commerce, notably the silk trade with Italy, rendered Granada the wealthiest city of Spain. Under them the capital became an asylum for Moslems fleeing from Christian attacks as well as heir to Cordova as home of art and science. But these were the last rays of the setting bun of Spanish Islam.

The period of Christian reconquest {reconquista} started as early as the fall of the Umayyad caliphate in the eleventh  $g_r^a \wedge_n^s \circ j_a$  century. In fact, Spanish historians consider the battle of Covadonga in 718, in which the Asturian chieftain Pelayo checked Moslem advance, as marking the actual beginning of reconquest. Had the Moslems in the eighth century destroyed the last vestiges of Christian power in the mountainous north, the subsequent story of Spain might have been entirely different. Impeded at first by constant friction among the Christian chiefs of the north, the process of reclamation was greatly accelerated by the final union of Castile and Leon in 1230. By the middle of

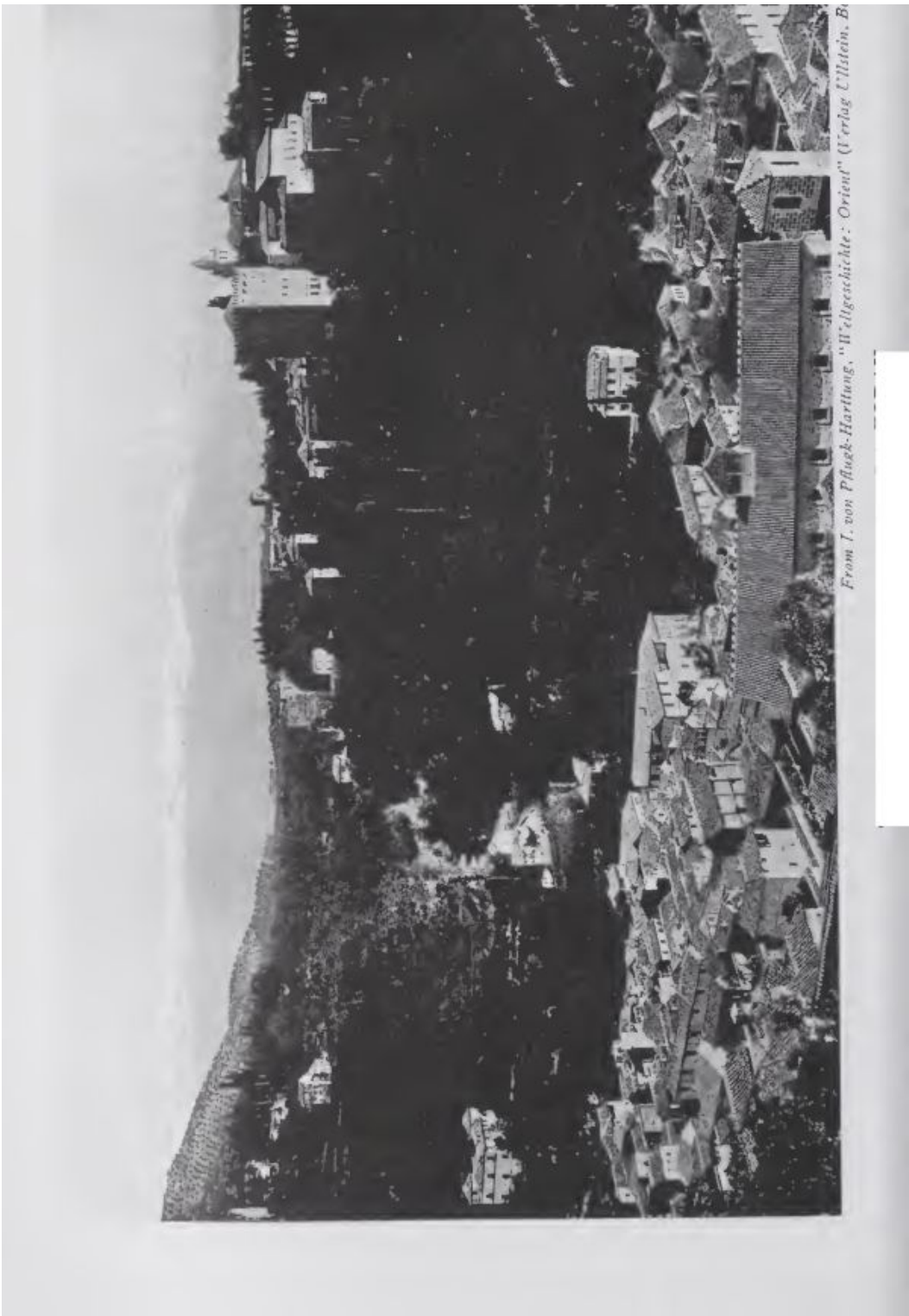


the thirteenth century the reconquest, with the exception of Granada, was practically completed. Toledo fell in 1085; Cordova followed in 1236 and Seville in 1248.

After the middle of the thirteenth century two major processes were in operation: the Christianizing of Spain and its unification. Christianizing the country was different from reconquering and unifying it. The only part of the peninsula where Islam had struck root was that where the earlier Semitic, Carthaginian, civilization had once flourished. The same was true of Sicily, a fact not without significance. In general the line of cleavage between Islam and Christianity coincided with the ancient line between the Punic and Occidental civilizations. By the thirteenth century many Moslems throughout the land had become subject to the Christians either by conquest or treaty, but had otherwise preserved their laws and religion. Such Moslems were designated Mudejars.<sup>35</sup> Many of the Mudejars were now forgetting their Arabic, adopting exclusively the Romance tongue and becoming more or less assimilated to the Christians.

Progress toward the final unification of Spain was slow but sure. At this time the Christian territory was made up of but two kingdoms, Castile and Aragon. The marriage in 1469 of Ferdinand of Aragon to Isabella of Castile united permanently the crowns of these two kingdoms. This union struck the note of doom for Moslem power in Spain. The Nasrid sultans, as they were called,<sup>36</sup> were by no means able to cope with the increasing danger. The last of them were involved in dynastic troubles which rendered





*From I. von Flugk-Hartung, "Weltgeschichte: Orient" (Verlag Ullstein, B.*

## THE ALHAMBRA AND GRANADA TODAY

their position still more precarious. Of the twenty-one sultans [37](#) [38](#) who ruled from 1232 to 1492, six ruled twice and one, Muhammad VIII al-Mutamassik, ruled thrice (1417-27, 1429-32, 1432-44), giving an average of about nine years for each of the twenty-eight reigns. Final ruin was hastened by the recklessness of the nineteenth sultan, 'Ali abu-al-Hasan (Sp. Alboacen, 1461-82, 1483-5), who not only refused to pay the customary tribute but commenced hostilities by attacking Castilian territory. In reprisal Ferdinand in 1482 surprised and took al-Hammah, [39](#) which stood at the foot of the Sierra de Alhama and guarded the south-western entrance into the Granadan domain. At this juncture a son of abu-al-Hasan, Muhammad abu-'Abdullah, instigated by his mother, Fatimah,<sup>3</sup> who was jealous of a Spanish<sup>4</sup> Christian concubine to whose children the royal husband was devoted, raised the banner of rebellion against his father. Supported by the garrison, the rebel son seized the Alhambra in 1482 and made himself master of Granada. In the following year this eleventh Muhammad of the dynasty, whose surname abu-'Abdullah was corrupted into the Spanish Boabdil, had the temerity to attack the Castilian town of Lucena, where he was beaten and taken captive. Abu-al-Hasan then reinstated himself on the Granadan throne and ruled until 1485, when he abdicated in favour of his more able brother Muhammad XII, nicknamed al-Zaghall (valiant), governor of Malaga.<sup>6</sup> In their prisoner abu-'Abdullah, Ferdinand and Isabella saw a perfect tool for effecting the ultimate destruction of the ill-fated Moslem kingdom. Supplied with Castilian men and money, abu-'Abdullah occupied in 1486 part of his uncle's capital and once more plunged the unlucky Granada, which presented the spectacle of having two sultans at the same time, in a destructive civil war. The legend relating to the destruction of the patriotic

<sup>1</sup> For lists consult Lane-Poole, *Dynasties*, pp. 28-9; Zambaur, pp. 58-9.

<sup>2</sup> Ar. for "hotspring", whence Sp. Alhama. Al-Hammah in Maqqari, vol. ii, p. 80i.

<sup>8</sup> Not 'A'ishah; L. S. de Lucena in *al-Andalus*, vol. xii (1947), pp. 359 seq.

<sup>4</sup> Rumiya in Maqqari, vol. ii, p. 803.

<sup>6</sup> Genealogical table of the last Nasrids:

18. Sa'd al-Musta'in (1445-6, 1453-61)

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noble family of banu-Sarra (Abencerrage) by abu-\*Abdullah, at Alhambra, belongs to this period in the mythical history of the last days of Granada.

In the meantime the Castilian army was advancing. One town after another fell before it. Malaga was reduced in the following year and many of its people were sold into slavery. The circle was being narrowed around the doomed capital. Al-Zaghall made a few unsuccessful stands against the army of Ferdinand, but abu-\*Abdullah acted as its ally. In his despair al-Zaghall made a final but fruitless appeal to the Moslem sovereigns of Africa, just then busy fighting among themselves. At last he surrendered and retired into Tilimsan,<sup>40</sup> where he passed the remainder of his days in misery and destitution, wearing, we are told, on his mendicant rags, a badge proclaiming, "This is the hapless king of Andalusia". Only the city of Granada now remained in Moslem hands.

No sooner was al-Zaghall thus disposed of than abu-<sup>\*</sup>Abdullah was requested (1490) by his patrons to surrender the city. Under the inspiration of a valiant leader the pusillanimous abu<sup>\*</sup> Abdullah refused to comply. In the spring of the following year Ferdinand with an army of 10,000 horse again entered the plain of Granada. As in the preceding year he destroyed the crops and orchards and drew the cordon tighter round the last stronghold of Islam in Spain. The siege was pressed into a blockade intended to starve the city into surrender.

When winter advanced with its extreme cold and heavy snow all access from outside was barred, food became scarce, prices soared and misery prevailed. In the meantime the enemy had seized every patch of ground outside the city walls and made it impossible for the besieged to plant or gather any crops. Conditions moved from bad to worse . . . until by the month of Safar [December 1491] the privations of the people had reached their extreme.<sup>41</sup>

Finally the garrison agreed to surrender, if not relieved within a period of two months, on the following terms: The sultan with all his officers and people would take the oath of obedience to the Castilian sovereigns; abu-<sup>f</sup>Abdullah would receive an estate in al-Basharat; <sup>42</sup> the Moslems would be left secure in person under their laws and free in the exercise of their religion.<sup>43</sup> The period of grace having expired without any sign of relief from the Turks or Africans, the Castilians entered Granada on January 2, 1492, and “the cross supplanted the crescent” on its towers.<sup>44</sup> The sultan with his queen, richly dressed, left his red fortress and departed in the midst of a gorgeous retinue, never to return. As he rode away he turned to take a last look at his capital, sighed and burst into tears. His mother, hitherto his evil genius, allegedly turned upon him with the words,

“Thou dost well to weep like a woman for what thou couldst not defend like a man”. The rocky height whence he took his sad farewell look is still known by the name El Ultimo Suspiro del Moro, the last sigh of the Moor.

Abu-'Abdullāh made his home - first on his allotted estate, but later retired to Fäs, where he died in 1533-4 and where his descendants in the year in which al-Maqqari [45](#) was compiling his history (1627-8) were still objects of charity, “counted among the beggars”.

Their Catholic Majesties Ferdinand and Isabella failed to Morisco abide by the terms of the capitulation. Under the leadership of fiQ<sub>n</sub><sup>r</sup>secu\* the queen’s confessor Cardinal Ximenez de Cisneros, [46](#) [47](#) a campaign of forced conversion was inaugurated in 1499. The cardinal at first tried to withdraw from circulation Arabic books dealing with Islam by burning them. Granada was the scene of a bonfire of Arabic manuscripts. The Inquisition was then instituted and kept busy. All Moslems who remained in the country after the capture of Granada were now called Moriscos, [48](#) a term applied originally to Spaniards converted into Islam. The Moslem Spaniards spoke a Romance dialect but employed

## THE ARABS IN EUROPE: SPAIN AND SICILY PART iv

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the Arabic script.<sup>1</sup> Many, if not most, Moriscos were of course of Spanish descent but all were now reminded that their ancestors had been Christians and that they must either submit to baptism or suffer the consequences. The Mudejars were grouped with the Moriscos and many became crypto-Moslems, professing Christianity but secretly practising Islam. Some would come home from their Christian weddings to be married secretly after the Moslem

rite; many would adopt a Christian name for public and an Arabic one for private use. As early as 1501 a royal decree was issued that all Moslems in Castile and Leon should either recant or leave Spain, but evidently it was not strictly applied. In 1526 the Moslems of Aragon were confronted with the same alternatives. In 1556 Philip II promulgated a law requiring the remaining Moslems to abandon at once their language, worship, institutions and manner of life. He even ordered the destruction of the Spanish baths as a relic of infidelity. A rising, the second of its kind, started in Granada and spread to the neighbouring mountains, but was put down. The final order of expulsion was signed by Philip III in 1609, resulting in the forcible deportation en masse of practically all Moslems on Spanish soil. Some half a million are said to have suffered this fate and landed on the shores of Africa or to have taken ship to more distant lands of Islam. It was mainly from these Moriscos that the ranks of the Moroccan corsairs were recruited. Between the fall of Granada and the first decade of the seventeenth century it is estimated that about three million Moslems were banished or executed. The Moorish problem was for ever solved for Spain, which thus became the conspicuous exception to the rule that wherever Arab civilization was planted there it was permanently fixed. "The Moors were banished; for a while Christian Spain shone, like the moon, with a borrowed light, then came the eclipse, and in that darkness Spain has grovelled ever since."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The literature left by Moriscos is varied and linguistically interesting. It is termed *aljamiado* from *Ar. al-a'jamiyah*, foreign tongue. A collection of such manuscripts was found under the floor of an old house in Aragon, where they were apparently hidden from the officers of the Inquisition. These are the *Manuscritos arabes y aljamiados de la Biblioteca de la Junta*, ed. J. Ribera and M. Asin (Madrid, 1912). See A. R.

Nykl, *A Compendium of Aljamiado Literature* (Paris, 1928).

<sup>2</sup> Lane-Poole, *Moors in Spain*, p. 280.

## CHAPTER XL

### INTELLECTUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

MOSLEM Spain wrote one of the brightest chapters in the intellectual history of medieval Europe. Between the middle of the eighth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries, as we have noted before, the Arabic-speaking peoples were the main bearers of the torch of culture and civilization throughout the world. Moreover they were the medium through which ancient science and philosophy were recovered, supplemented and transmitted in such a way as to make possible the renaissance of Western Europe. In all this, Arabic Spain had a large share.

In the purely linguistic sciences, including philology, grammar Language and lexicography, the Arabs of al-Andalus lagged behind those of al-<sup>\*</sup>Iraq. Al-Qali (901-67), mentioned above as one of the eminent professors of the university of Cordova, was born in Armenia and educated in Baghdad. His chief disciple, Muhammad ibn-al-Hasan al-Zubaydi <sup>1</sup> (928-89), belonged to a family that hailed from Hirns, but was himself born in Seville. Al-Zubaydi was appointed by al-Hakam to supervise the education of his young son Hisham, who later appointed him qadi and chief magistrate of Seville. Al-Zubaydi's chief work was a classified list of grammarians and philologists who had flourished up to his time; al-Suyuti made extensive use of it in his *Muzhir*. It should be recalled at this point that Hebrew grammar, which was based essentially on Arabic grammar (above, p. 43, n. 1) and to this day uses technical terms



which are translations of corresponding Arabic terms, had its birth in Moslem Spain. Hayyuj Judah ben-David (Ar. abu-Zakariya' Yahya ibn-Dawud), the father of scientific Hebrew grammar, flourished in Cordova, where he died early in the eleventh century.

In literature the most distinguished author was ibn-\*Abd-Rabbih (860-940) of Cordova, the laureate of \*Abd-al-Rahman

<sup>1</sup> See Tha'alibi, Yatitnah, vol. i, p. 409; ibn-KhallikSn, vol. ii, pp. 338-40.

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558 THE ARABS IN EUROPE: SPAIN AND SICILY part IV III.<sup>1</sup> Ibn-'Abd-Rabbih was descended from an enfranchised slave of Hishám I. His title to fame rests on the miscellaneous anthology he composed. al~ lqd al-Farzd<sup>2</sup> (the unique necklace), which after al-Aghani occupies first place among works on the literary history of the Arabs. But the greatest scholar and the most original thinker of Spanish Islam was Ali ibn-Hazm (994-1064), one of the two or three most fertile minds and most prolific writers of Islam. Ibn-Hazm claimed descent from a Persian client, but was in reality the grandson of a Spanish Moslem convert from Christianity. In his youth he adorned the tottering courts of 'Abd-al-Rahmán al-Mustazhir and Hishám al-Mu'tadd<sup>3</sup> in the capacity of vizir, but on the ensuing dissolution of the Umayyad caliphate he retired to a life of seclusion and literary pursuit. Ibn-Khallikan<sup>4</sup> and al-Qifti<sup>5</sup> ascribe to him four hundred volumes on history, theology, tradition, logic, poetry and allied subjects. As an exponent of the Záhirit (literalist) school of jurisprudence and theology, long since extinct, he was as tireless as he was vigorous in his literary activity. In his Tawq al-Hamamah<sup>6</sup> (the dove's necklace), an

anthology of love poems, he extols platonic love. The most valuable of his surviving works, however, is *al-Fasl fi al-Milal w-al-Ahwa w-al-Nihal*<sup>1</sup> (the decisive word on sects, heterodoxies and denominations), which entitles him to the honour of being the first scholar in the field of comparative religion. In this work he pointed out difficulties in the biblical narratives which disturbed no other minds till the rise of higher criticism in the sixteenth century.

For the history of literature the period of the party kings, particularly of the 'Abbáids, Murábits and Muwahhids, was one of special importance. The cultural seed sown in the Umayyad age did not come into full fruition until then. The civil wars which closed the Umayyad period and the subsequent rise of new dynasties enabled such centres as Seville, Toledo and Granada to eclipse Cordova. From this last city Arabicized

<sup>1</sup> See Yñqūt, *Udabá'*, vol. ii, pp. 67-72; ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, pp. 56-8.

<sup>2</sup> Several editions, none critical. The one used here is in 3 vols. (Cairo, 1302).

<sup>8</sup> Yáqūt, *Udaba* , vol. v, p. 87.  
233.

<sup>4</sup> Vol. ii, p. 22.

<sup>6</sup> P.

<sup>6</sup> Ed. D. K. Pétróf (Leyden, 1914); tr. A. R. Nykl, *The Dove's Neck-Ring about Love and Lovers* (Paris, 1931).

<sup>7</sup> No scholarly edition. The one used here is in 5 vols. (Cairo, 1347-8). See Asin, *Ahenházam de Córdoba y su historia critica de las ideas religiosas*, 5 vols. (Madrid. 1927-32).

Christians, Mozarabs, quite conversant with Arabic literature, had communicated many elements of Arabic culture to the other kingdoms of the north and south. In prose the fables, tales and apologues, which began to flourish in Western Europe during the thirteenth century, present unmistakable analogies with earlier Arabic works, themselves of Indo-Persian origin. The delightful fables of Kallah wa-Dimnah were translated into Spanish for Alfonso the Wise (1252-84) of Castile and Leon, and shortly afterwards into Latin by a baptized Jew. A Persian translation became through French one of the sources of La Fontaine, as acknowledged by him. To the *maqamah*, written in rhymed prose adorned with all manner of philological curiosity and intended to teach some moral lesson through the adventures of a cavalier-hero, the Spanish picaresque novel bears close affinity. But the most significant contribution of Arabic to the literature of medieval Europe was the influence it exercised by its form, which helped liberate Western imagination from a narrow, rigid discipline circumscribed by convention. The rich fantasy of Spanish literature betrays Arabic models, as does the wit of Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, whose author was once a prisoner in Algiers and jokingly claimed that the book had an Arabic original.

Wherever and whenever the Arabic language was used there Poetry the passion for poetical composition was intense. Verses countless in number passed from mouth to mouth and were admired by high and low, not so much perhaps for their contents as for their music and exquisite diction. This sheer joy in the beauty and euphony of words, a characteristic of Arabic-speaking peoples, manifested itself on Spanish soil. The first Umayyad sovereign was a poet and so were several of his successors. Among the party kings al-Mu'tamid ibn-'Abbad was especially favoured by the Muses. Most of the sovereigns had laureates attached to their courts and took them along on their travels and wars. Seville

boasted the largest number of graceful and inspired poets, but the flame had been kindled long before in Cordova and later shone brilliantly at Granada as long as that city remained the bulwark of Islam.

Aside from ibn-'Abd-Rabbih, ibn-Hazm and ibn-al-Khatib, Spain produced a number of poets whose compositions are still considered standard. Such a one was abu-al-Walid Ahmad ibn-

560 THE ARABS IN EUROPE: SPAIN AND SICILY part IV  
Zaydun (1003-71'), reckoned by some as the greatest poet of al-Andalus. Ibn-Zaydun belonged to the noble family of Makhzum, a branch of the Quraysh.<sup>1</sup> He was first a confidential agent to ibn-Jahwar, chief of the Cordovan oligarchy, but later fell from grace, probably on account of his violent love for the poetess Walladah, daughter of the Caliph al-Mustakfi. After several years in prison and exile he was appointed by al-Mu'tamid al-'Abbadi to the twofold position of grand vizir and commander of the troops and given the title dhu-al-wzzaratayn? he of the two vizirates, i.e. that of the sword and that of the pen. It was under his influence that al-Mu'tamid sent an army in 1068 against Cordova and wrested it from Jahwarid hands. In al-Mu'tamid's court, which was temporarily removed to Cordova, ibn-Zaydun aroused the jealousy of a rival poet and minister, ibn-'Ammar, a man of obscure origin who at first led a wandering life singing the praises of anyone who cared to reward him. Ibn-'Ammar met his death at the hand of his patron al-Mu'tamid at Seville in 1086.<sup>3</sup> Besides being an accomplished poet ibn-Zaydun was a distinguished letter writer. One of his most widely read epistles is that in which he denounces ibn-'Abdus, minister of ibn-Jahwar and rival for the hand of Walladah. Several verses addressed by ibn-Zaydun<sup>4</sup> to Walladah depict the glowing beauty of al-

Zahra' with its gardens, and illustrate the deep feeling for nature which is characteristic of Spanish Arabic poetry.

This beautiful and talented Walladah (j\* 1087), renowned alike for personal charm and literary ability, was the Sappho of Spain, where Arab women seem to have shown special taste and aptitude for poetry and literature. Al-Maqqari<sup>5</sup> devotes a whole section to these women of al-Andalus in whom "eloquence was a second instinct". Walladah's home at Cordova was the meetingplace of wits, savants and poets.<sup>8</sup>

Among the lesser lights reference may be made to abu-Ishaq ibn-Khafajah<sup>7</sup> (j- 11-39), who spent his life in a little village south of Valencia without seeking to pay court to the kinglets of his time, and to the young licentious poet of Seville, Muhammad<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, pp. 75-

7. <sup>2</sup> Cf. Marrakushi, p. 74, 1. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Marrakushi, p. 89; ibn-Khaqan, pp. 98-9. Cf. ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, p. 370.

<sup>4</sup> Diwan, ed. Kamil Kilani and 'Abd-al-Rahman Khalifah (Cairo, 1932), pp. 257-8; tr. in Nicholson, Literary History, p. 425.

<sup>5</sup> Vol. ii, pp. 536-639.  
376.

<sup>0</sup> Ibn-Bassam, p.

<sup>7</sup> His Diwan published in Cairo. 1286. On his life see ibn-Khaqan, pp. 231-42; ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, pp. 23-4.

ibn-Hani' (937-73), who addressed several panegyrics to the Fatimid Caliph al-Mu'izz.<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Hani' was considered tainted with the opinions of Greek philosophers.<sup>2</sup>

Emancipated to a limited degree from the fetters of conventional Muwashshah, Spanish Arabic poetry developed new metrical forms and <sup>1</sup> acquired an almost modern sensibility to the beautiful in nature. Through its ballads and love songs it manifested a tenderly romantic feeling which anticipated the attitude of medieval chivalry. By the beginning of the eleventh century a lyric system of muwashshah <sup>3</sup> and zajal had been developed in the Andalus. Both forms were based on a refrain for the chorus and were undoubtedly sung. Music and song established and maintained everywhere their alliance with poetry.

It was abu-Bakr ibn-Quzman (f 1160), the wandering minstrel of Cordova who travelled from town to town singing the praises of the great, who lifted the zajal, till then left entirely to improvisators, to the dignity of a literary form.<sup>4</sup> As for the other variety of folk-song, the muwashshah, it was not only developed but invented in Spain, whence it spread into North Africa and the East. Among the noted muwashshah composers were abu-al-' Abbas<sup>5</sup> al-Tutuli, the blind poet of Tudela who died in his youth, in 1129, after singing the glories of \*Ali, son and successor of Yusuf ibn-Tashfin; Ibrahim ibn-Sahl<sup>6</sup> (f 1251 or 1260), a Sevillian convert from Judaism whose persistence in the use of wine rendered his Islam suspect; and Muhammad ibn-Yusuf abu-Hayyan (1256-1344) of Granada, a polyglot of Berber origin who also wrote Persian, Turkish,<sup>7</sup> Coptic and Ethiopic grammars.<sup>8</sup> Of these only the Turkish survived.

It was Arabic poetry in general and this lyric type in particular that aroused native Christian admiration and became one of the

<sup>1</sup> Zahid'Ali, Tabyin al-Ma'anifi Sharh Diwan ibn-Hani (Cairo, 1352), pp. 1-10

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, p. 367; Maqqari, vol. ii, p. 444.

<sup>3</sup> So called by comparison with wishah, a double belt ornamented with varicoloured pearls which women wear diagonally round the body from shoulder to hip.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Khaldun, Muqaddamah, p. 524. Ibn-Quzman's poems have been published by A. R. Nykl, El cancionero (Madrid, 1933).

<sup>5</sup> Name wrongly given in ibn-Khaqan, p. 273, ibn-Khaldun, Muqaddamah,

p. 519.

<sup>6</sup> His Diwan, printed in Beirut, 1885. On him see Kutubi, Fawat, vol. i, pp. 29-35; Maqqari, vol. ii, pp. 351-4; Soualah Mohammed, Ibrahim Ibn Sahl (Algiers, 1914).

<sup>7</sup> Al-Idrak li-Lisan al-Atrdk, ed. Ahmed Caferoglu (Istanbul, 1930-31); the earliest or second earliest Turkish grammar.

<sup>6</sup> Kutubi, vol. ii, p. 356; Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 823 seq. For other poets consult ibn-Khaldun, Muqaddamah, pp. 518-34.

potent factors in assimilation. Two such forms, the zajal and the muwashshah, developed into the Castilian popular verse form of villancico, which was extensively used for Christian hymns, including Christmas carols. The sestet, which in its original form presumably rhymed CDE, CDE, was probably suggested by a form of Arabic zajal instanced in the works of

the Andalusian poets. Al-Qazwīnī<sup>1</sup> (d. 1283) asserts that at Silves (Silves) in southern Portugal one would meet even ploughmen capable of improvising verse. This brings to mind the many men in modern Lebanon, qawwālūn, who extemporaneously produce such folkpoetry, some of which they still call zajal and muwashshah.

The emergence of a definite literary scheme of platonic love in Spanish as early as the eighth century marks a distinctive contribution of Arabic poetry. In southern France the first Provençal poets appear full-fledged toward the end of the eleventh century with palpitating love expressed in a wealth of fantastic imagery. The troubadours,<sup>2</sup> who flourished in the twelfth century, imitated their southern contemporaries, the *liric*-singers. Following the Arabic precedent the cult of the dame suddenly arises in southwestern Europe. The *Chanson de Roland*—the noblest monument of early European literature, whose appearance prior to 1080 marks the beginning of a new civilization— that of Western Europe—just as the Homeric poems mark the beginning of historic Greece, owes its existence to a military contact with Moslem Spain.

## Education

Primary education was based, as in all Moslem lands, on writing and reading from the Koran and on Arabic grammar and poetry. Though mainly a private concern, education was nevertheless so widely spread that a high percentage of Spanish Moslems could read and write<sup>3</sup>—a situation unknown in Europe of that age. Higher value was placed on the function of the elementary teacher than in other lands of Islam. The position of women in the learned life, as portrayed by such an author as al-Maqqari<sup>4</sup> and verified by the facts of literary history, proves that in



Andalusia the maxims prohibiting the teaching of writing to women were but little applied.

Higher education was based on koranic exegesis and theology,

<sup>1</sup> Àthâr, p. 364. R. Menéndez Pidal in Bulletin hispanique, vol. xl (1935), pp. 337 seq. A. R. Nykl in ibid. vol. xli (1939), pp. 305-15.

<sup>2</sup> This word may have come from Ar. farab, music, song; Ribera, Disertaciones,

vol. ii, p. 141. <sup>8</sup> Cf. above, p. 531. \* See above, p. 560. philosophy, Arabic grammar, poetry and lexicography, history and geography. Several of the principal towns possessed what might be called universities, chief among w'hich were those of Cordova, Seville, Malaga and Granada. The university of Cordova included among its departments astronomy, mathematics and medicine, in addition to theology and law. Its enrolment must have reached into thousands and its certificate opened the way to the most lucrative posts in the realm. The university of Granada was founded by the seventh Nasrid, Yusuf abu-al-Hajjaj (1333-54), whose administration was graced by the poet-historian Lisan-al-Din ibn-al-Khatib.<sup>1</sup> The building had its gates guarded by stone lions. The curriculum comprised theology, jurisprudence, medicine, chemistry, philosophy and astronomy. Castilian and other foreign students patronized this institution. In it and other universities it was customary to hold occasional public meetings and commemorations in which original poems were recited and orations delivered, usually by members of the faculty. A favourite inscription over collegiate portals ran thus: "The world is supported by four things only: the

learning of the wise, the justice of the great, the prayers of the righteous and the valour of the brave ”.

Side by side with universities libraries flourished. The royal library of Cordova, started by Muhammad I (852-86) and enlarged by \*Abd-al-Rahman III, became the largest and best when al-Hakam II added his own collection. A number of persons, including some women, had private collections.

The peculiarities of Moslem life with its lack of political Books assemblies and theatres, which were characteristic features of Greece and Rome, made books almost the sole means of acquiring knowledge. As a book market Cordova held first place in Spain. This anecdote illustrates the spirit of the time: <sup>2</sup>

When living in Cordova I frequented its book market looking for a book in which I was especially interested. At last a copy of good calligraphy and handsome binding fell into my hands. Full of joy, I began to bid for it but was time after time outbid by another until the price offered far exceeded the proper limit. I then said to the auctioneer: “Show me this rival bidder who has raised the price beyond the worth of the book ”. Accordingly he took me to a man attired in distinguished

<sup>1</sup> Lamhah, pp. 91, 96. In late years Granada has again become a centre for Arabic studies in Spain.

<sup>2</sup> Maqqari, vol. i. p. 302.

garb. Approaching him I said: “May Allah keep our lord the faqth strong! If you have a special object in acquiring this book I will let it go, for the bidding has already exceeded the

limit.” His answer was: “I am not a faqlh, nor am I aware of the contents of the book. But I have just established a library and made much of it in order to pride myself among the notables of my town. There is still an empty space there which this book will just fill up. Seeing that it was in elegant hand and good cover, I liked it and cared not how much I paid for it. for, thanks to Allah, I am a man of means.”

## Paper

This accumulation of books in Andalusia would not have been possible but for the local manufacture of writing-paper, one of the most beneficial contributions of Islam to Europe. Without paper, printing from movable type, which was invented in Germany about the middle of the fifteenth century, would not have been successful, and without paper and printing popular education in Europe, on the scale to which it developed, would not have been feasible. From Morocco, into which the manufacture of paper was introduced from the East, the industry passed into Spain in the middle of the twelfth century.<sup>49</sup> Yaqut<sup>2</sup> mentions Shatibah (Jativa) as the centre of the industry in Spain. A philological reminder of this historical fact is English “ream”, which is derived through Old French rayme from Spanish resma, a loan-word from Arabic rizmah, a bundle. After Spain the art of paper-making was established in Italy (ca. 1268-76), also as a result of Moslem influence, presumably from Sicily. France owed its first paper-mills to Spain, and not to returning Crusaders as claimed by some. From these countries the industry spread throughout Europe. A secretary of \*Abd-al-Rahman used to write the official communications in his home and send them to a special office for reproduction—a form of printing (tab\*, perhaps block printing)—whence copies were distributed to the various governmental agents.<sup>3</sup>

After the destruction of Moslem power in Spain less than two thousand volumes survived to be collected by Philip II (1556-98) and his successors from the various Arab libraries. These formed the nucleus of the Escorial library still standing not far from Madrid. In the early part of the seventeenth century the Sharif Zaydan, sultan of Morocco, fleeing his capital, sent his library aboard a ship whose captain refused to land the books at the proper destination because he had not received full pay in advance. On its way to Marseille the ship fell into the hands of Spanish pirates and its bookish booty, to the number of three or four thousand volumes, was deposited by order of Philip III in the Escorial, which made this library one of the richest in Arabic manuscripts.<sup>1</sup>

In Spain Arabic philology, theology, historiography, geography, astronomy and allied sciences had a comparatively late development, since the Moslems there, unlike their co-religionists of Syria and al-Traq, had but little to learn from the natives. Even after their rise Spanish sciences lagged behind those of the Eastern caliphate. It was mainly in such disciplines as botany, medicine, philosophy and astronomical mathematics that Western Moslems made their greatest mark.

One of the earliest and best known of Andalusian historians was abu-Bakr ibn-'Umar, usually known as ibn-al-Qūtiyah,<sup>2</sup> who was born and flourished at Cordova, where he died in 977. His *Tarikh If Utah* (variant *Fath al-Andaltis fi* which we have used in this work, extends from the Moslem conquest to the early part of 'Abd-al-Rahman III's reign. Ibn-al-Qūtiyah was also a grammarian and his treatise on the conjugation of verbs<sup>4</sup> was the first ever composed on the subject. Another early but more prolific historical writer was abu-Marwān Hayyān ibn-Khalaf of Cordova, surnamed ibn-Hayyan (987 or 988-1076). Ibn-Hayyan's list of works

contains no less than fifty titles, one of which, al-Matn, comprised sixty volumes. Unfortunately only one work, al-Muqtabis fi Ta'rikh Rijdl al-Andalusfi has survived. The most Valuable work on the Muwahhid period was written in 1224 by the Moroccan historian 'Abd-al-Wahid al-Marrakushi,<sup>6</sup> who sojourned in Spain.

[1](#)

“Tüjah” in ibn-Khaldün, vol. iv, pp. 142-3.

[2](#)

\* From Ar. al-khandaq, the moat. Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 227, 228.

[3](#)

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-Khaldün, vol. iv, p. 143, quoted in Maqqari, vol. i, p. 235

[4](#)

Ibn-Tdhári, vol. ii, p. 229; ibn-Khaldün, vol. iv, pp. 142-3; Maqqari, vol. i, p. 227.

[5](#)

\* Three thousand in ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, p. 247. Cf. Maqqari, vol. i, p. 355\*

[6](#)

Ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, p. 247. Cf. Maqqari, vol. i, p. 356.

[7](#)

Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 299, 304. Cf. ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, pp. 247-8.

[8](#)

Maqqari, vol. i, p. 298, 11. 2-3. These lights were evidently fastened to the front doors or corners.

[9](#)

John W. Draper, A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe, rev. ed.

[10](#)

(London, 1910), vol. ii, p. 31.

[11](#)

Tabaqat, pp. 8-9.

[12](#)

See below, p. 549.  
109.

[12](#) Ibn-al-Khafib, Lamhah, p.

[13](#)

<sup>3</sup> In the sense of duty upon goods. From Ar. 'aw dr iy ah.

[14](#)

<sup>4</sup> Ar. ghurab, war vessel, through Sp. corbeta.

[15](#)

<sup>5</sup> Ar. jalbah, boat, through Sp. chalupa.

[16](#)

« Pp. 51-2.  
Islands.

<sup>7</sup> Perhaps the Canary and Cape Verde

[17](#)

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-al-Khatib, Ihafah, vol. i, p. 37.      <sup>9</sup> From Qx.phollis,  
from X^follis.

[18](#)

Vol. i, p. 363.

[19](#)

Note the Moslem form of the names of these two Christian dignitaries.

[20](#)

Ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, p. 251; ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, p. 145;  
Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 245, 252-6.

[21](#)

Ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii, p. 498; ibn-al-Khatib, Ihatah, vol. i, p.  
305.

[22](#)

' Ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii. p. 256.  
256-7.

\* Ibid. pp. 253,

[23](#)

Ibn-'Idhari, vol. ii, pp. 267-9; ibn-Khaldün, vol. iv, pp. 147'8;  
ibn-al-Athir

[24](#)

vol. ix, pp. 124-5; ibn-al-Khatib, Ihafah, vol. ii, 67-9

[25](#)

' Ibn-'Idhâri, vol. ii, pp. 294-7.  
258.

<sup>8</sup> Maqqari, vol. i, p.

[26](#)

Nicholson, Literary History, p. 413; ibn-al-Khatib, Ihdtah, vol.  
ii, p. 73;

[27](#)

ibn-al-Abbar, Hullah, p. 151. Ar. thughur, rendered “gaps of  
Spain”, mean»

[28](#)

“marches” or “frontier forts”.

[29](#)

Sulaymân (1009-10, 1013-16)

[30](#)

Jul.án Ribera y Terragó, Disertaciones y opúsculos (Madrid,  
1928), vol. i, pp. 12-35, 109-12.

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[31](#)



<sup>1</sup> From Ar. sayyid, colloquial sid, lord.

[32](#)

Cf. ibn-al-Khatib, Ihatah, vol. i, p. 13.

[33](#)

Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 109, 721. Cf. ibn-Jubayr, pp. 16-17. See above, p. 502.

[34](#)

<sup>2</sup> Jbn-al-Khajib, Lamhah, p. 13; see above, p. 231.

[35](#)

From Ar. mudajjan, one allowed (by the Christian conquerors) to remain where he is on condition that he pays tribute.

[36](#)

Ibn-Khaldün, vol. iv, p. 172.

[37](#)

19. \*Ali abu-al-Hasan (1461-82, 1483-5)      20.  
Muhammad XII al-Zaghall

[38](#)

, (1485-6)

[39](#)

21. Muhammad XI abu-'Abdulläh (1482-3, 1486-92)

[40](#)

Maqqari, vol. ii, p. 810.

[41](#) Ibid p. 811.

[41](#)

<sup>3</sup> Sp. Alpujarras. The term, meaning “ pastures ”, included the mountainous

[42](#)

foreland south of the Sierra Nevada as far as the Mediterranean.

[43](#)

Cf. Akhbär al-' Aprfi Inqida Daivlat bani-Napr, ed. M. J. Müller (Münich, 1863), p. 49.

[44](#)

Legend makes Alhambra in that same year the scene of Christopher Columbus' appeal to Queen Isabella for a subsidy for his maritime adventure, the greatest in history, which resulted in the discovery of America.

[45](#)

Vol. ii, pp. 814-15.

[46](#)

His greatest service was the printing (1502-17) of the Complutensian Polyglot,

[47](#)

the first edition of the Bible in the original text with translation.

[48](#)

Sp. for “little Moors”. The Romans called Western Africa Mauretania and its inhabitants Mauri (presumably of Phoenician origin meaning “ western ”), whence Sp. Moro, Eng. Moor. The Berbers, therefore, were the Moors proper, but the term was conventionally applied to all Moslems of Spain and north-western Africa. The half-million Moslems of the Philippines are still known by the name Moros, given them by the Spaniards on the discovery of the islands by Magellan in 1521.

[49](#)

See above, p. 347.      ' Vol. iii, p. 235.      \* Ibn-al-Abbar, Hullah, p. 137.

Andalusia produced a number of biographers, one of the first among whom was abu-al-Walid 'Abdullah ibn-Muhammad ibn-al-Faradi, who was born in 962 at Cordova, where he studied and

<sup>1</sup> See its catalogue, *Les manuscrits arabes de P Escorial*, by Hartwig Derenbourg, 2 vols. (Paris, 1884-1903), vol. iii, revised by Lévi-Provençal (Paris, 1928).

<sup>3</sup> See *Tha'alibi*, vol. i, pp. 411-12; *ibn-Khallikán*, vol. ii, pp. 336\*8.

<sup>3</sup> (Madrid, 1868); tr. Don Julián Ribera, *Historia de la conquista de España* (Madrid, 1926).

<sup>4</sup> *Kitáb al-Afal*, ed. Ignaz Guidi (Leyden, 1894).

<sup>6</sup> Ed. Melchor M. Antuña, pt. 3 (Paris, 1937).

• *Al-Mujib fi Talkhis Akhbár al-Maghrib*, ed. R. Dozy, 2nd ed. (Leyden, 1881)

tr. E. Fagnan, *Histoire des Almohades* (Algiers, 1893).

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taught. When thirty years old he undertook a pilgrimage in the course of which he stopped to study at al-Qayrawan, Cairo, Makkah and al-Madinah. After his return he was appointed qádi of Valencia. During the sack of Cordova by the Berbers in 1013 ibn-al-Faradi was murdered in his home; his body was not found till the fourth day afterward and was so decomposed that it was buried without the usual ceremonial washing and wrapping.<sup>[1](#) [2](#) [3](#)</sup> Only one of ibn-al-Faradi's works, *Tarikh ' Ulama al-Andalus\** is extant. This collection of biographies of the Arab scholars of Spain was supplemented by ibn-Bashkuwal, abu-al-Qásim Khalaf ibn-

'Abd-al-Malik, in a volume completed in 1139 under the title al-Silah ft Tarikh A'immat al-Andalus? This is one of two surviving works of ibn-Bashkuwal, who is credited with the composition of some fifty books.<sup>4 5</sup> Ibn-Bashkuwal was born at Cordova in 1101 and died there in 1183. His Silah was continued by abu-'Abdulláh Muhammad ibn-al-Abbar (1199-1260) of Valencia under the title al-Takmilah h-Kztab al-Silah? In addition to this work ibn-al-Abbar wrote al-Hullah al-Siyara,<sup>6</sup> a collection of biographies. Another valuable dictionary of learned Spanish Arabs is Bughyat al-Multamis fi Tarikh Rijal al-Andalus, by al-Dabbi,<sup>7</sup> abu-Ja'far Ahmad ibn-Yahya (d. 1203), who flourished in Murcia.

In the history of science we have from the pen of abu-al-Qásim Sá'id ibn-Ahmad al-Andalusi (1029-70)<sup>8</sup> the Tabaqát al-Umam\* (classification of nations), which was a source of al-Qifti, ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah and ibn-al-Tbri. Sá'id held the office of qádi of Toledo under the banu-dhu-al-Nun and distinguished himself as historian, mathematician and astronomical observer.

The two names which stand for the highest literary accomplishment and historical comprehension of which Western Islam was capable are those of the two friends and officials of the Nasrid court, ibn-al-Khatib and ibn-Khaldun.

Lisan-al-Din ibn-al-Khatib<sup>9 10</sup> (1313-74) was descended from an Arab family which had migrated to Spain from Syria. Under the seventh Nasrid sultan, Yusuf abu-al-Hajjaj (1333-54), and his son Muhammad V (1354-9, 1362-91), he held the pompous title of dhu-al-wizaratayn? In 1371 he fled from Granada because of court intrigues, only to be strangled to death three years later at Fas in revenge for a private grievance. In his death Granada, if not the whole of Arab Spain, lost its last important author, poet and statesman. Of the sixty odd works penned by ibn-al-Khatib, which are

chiefly poetical, belletristic, historical ^ geographical, medicinal and philosophic, about a third have survived. Of these the most important for us is the extensive history of Granada.<sup>11</sup>

\*Abd-al-Rahman ibn-Khaldun (1332-1406) was born in Tunis of a Spanish Arab family which traced its ancestry to a Hadra-mawt tribe. The founder of the family had migrated in the eighth century with Yamanites to Spain; his descendants flourished in Seville until the thirteenth century. 'Abd-al-Rahman himself held a number of high offices in Fas before he fell into disgrace and entered (1362) the service of the sultan of Granada, Muhammad V. The sultan entrusted him with an important mission of peace to the Castilian court. Two years later, after having aroused the jealousy of his powerful friend ibn-al-Khatib, ibn-Khaldun returned to al-Maghrib. Here he occupied a number of positions, finally retiring to Qal'at ibn-Salamah,<sup>12</sup> where he began work on his history and resided till 1378. In 1382 he set out on a pilgrimage but broke his journey in Cairo to lecture at its mosque al-Azhar. Two years later he was appointed chief Malikite qadi of Cairo by the Mamluk Sultan al-Zahir Barquq. In 1401 he accompanied Barquq's successor al-Nasir Faraj to Damascus on his campaign against the dreadful Tamerlane (Timur), who received ibn-Khaldun as an honoured guest. Thus

568 THE ARABS IN EUROPE: SPAIN AND SICILY PART IV did this historian play a significant part in the politics of North Africa and Spain, all of which prepared him admirably for the writing of his great work. His comprehensive history, entitled Kitab al-Ibar wa-Diwan al-Mubtadd w-al-Khabar fi Ayyam al-Arab w-al- A jam w-al- Barbar <sup>13 14</sup> (book of instructive examples and register of subject and predicate dealing with the history of the Arabs, Persians and Berbers),

is made up of three parts: a Muqaddamah? (prolegomena), forming volume one; the main body, treating of the Arabs and neighbouring peoples; and the last part,<sup>15 16</sup> which sketches the history of the Berbers and the Moslem dynasties of North Africa. Unfortunately the critical theories ably propounded in the Muqaddamah were not applied to the main part of the work. However, the section treating of the Arab and Berber tribes of the Maghrib will ever remain a valuable guide.

The fame of ibn-Khaldun rests on his Muqaddamah. In it he presented for the first time a theory of historical development which takes due cognizance of the physical facts of climate and geography as well as of the moral and spiritual forces at work. As one who endeavoured to formulate laws of national progress and decay ibn-Khaldun may be considered the discoverer as he himself claimed<sup>17</sup>—of the true scope and nature of history or at least the real founder of the science of sociology. No Arab writer, indeed no European, had ever taken a view of history at once so comprehensive and philosophic. By the consensus of critical opinion ibn-Khaldun was the greatest historical philosopher Islam produced and one of the greatest of all time.

**Geography** The best-known geographer of the eleventh century was al-Bakri, a Hispano-Arab, and the most brilliant geographical author and cartographer of the twelfth century, indeed of all medieval time, was al-Idrisi, a descendant of a royal Spanish Arab family who got his education in Spain.

Abu-'Ubayd 'Abdullah ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Bakri,<sup>18 19</sup> the earliest of the Western Moslem geographers whose works have survived, flourished in Cordova, where he died at an advanced age in 1094. A belletrist, poet and philologist, he won his laurels through his voluminous geography al-

Masalik w-al-Mamalik [18](#) (the book of roads and kingdoms), which, like most geographical works of the Middle Ages, was written in the form of an itinerary. The book has survived only in part.

Al-Idrisi, born at Ceuta in 1100, shed lustre on the reign of Roger II, Norman king of Sicily, and will be treated in that connection.

After al-Idrisi Arab geographical literature can claim no Travel» great originality and is represented by travellers' narratives, which then become especially numerous. The best known among these travellers was ibn-Jubayr, [20 21](#) abu-al-Husayn Muhammad ibn-Ahmad, who was born in Valencia in 1145 <sup>an<^</sup> educated at Jativa. Between 1183 and 1185 ibn-Jubayr undertook a journey from Granada to Makkah and back, visiting Egypt, al-Traq, Syria—parts of which were still in the hands of the Crusaders— and Sicily. He travelled in the East on two further occasions, 1189-1191 and 1217, but on the latter journey he only reached Alexandria, where he died. His Rihlah ^ the account of his first journey, is one of the most important works of its kind in Arabic literature. Another Hispano-Arab geographer and traveller was abu-Hamid Muhammad al-Mazini (1080/11169/70) of Granada, who visited Russia in 1136. While among the Bulgars in the Volga region he witnessed a commercial activity unreported in any other source, trade in fossil mammoth ivory, which was exported as far as Khwarizm to be made into combs and pyxides. [22](#)

The travels of ibn-Jubayr and al-Mazini were eclipsed by those of the Moroccan Arab Muhammad ibn-'Abdullah ibn-Battutah, the Moslem globe-trotter of the Middle Ages. Ibn-Battutah was born at Tanjah (Tangier) in 1304 and died in Marrakush in 1377. In the second quarter of that century he



## Influence over the West

### Astronomy and mathematics

made four pilgrimages to Makkah in conjunction with which he journeyed all over the Moslem world. Eastward he reached Ceylon, Bengal, the Maldive Islands and China. He also visited Constantinople. His last travels in 1353 him far into the interior of Africa. His alleged visit to the city of Bulghar, near Kazan and the Volga, seems to be the only serious fabrication in his whole account.<sup>1</sup>

Arab geographical studies had but a limited influence in the West. They kept alive the ancient doctrine of the sphericity of the earth, without which the discovery of the New World would not have been possible. An exponent of this doctrine was abu-'Ubaydah Muslim al-Balansi (of Valencia), who flourished in the first half of the tenth century.<sup>2</sup> They perpetuated the Hindu idea that the known hemisphere of the world had a centre or "world cupola" or "summit" situated at an equal distance from the four cardinal points. This arln<sup>3</sup> theory found its way into a Latin work published in 1410» From this Columbus acquired the doctrine which made him believe that the earth was shaped in the form of a pear and that on the western hemisphere opposite the arln was a corresponding elevated centre. It was, however, in the realm of astronomical geography and mathematics that a number of new concepts were contributed to Western lore.

In Spain astronomical studies were cultivated assiduously after the middle of the tenth century and were regarded with special favour by the rulers of Cordova. Seville and Toledo. Following abu-Ma'shar of Baghdad, most of the Andalusian astronomers believed in astral influence as the cause underlying the chief occurrences between birth and death on this earth. The study of this astral influence, i.e.

astrology, necessitated the determining of the location of places throughout the world together with their latitudes and longitudes. Thus did astrology contribute to the study of astronomy. Finally it was through Spanish channels that the Latin West found its Oriental inspiration in astronomy and astrology. The leading Moslem astronomical works were translated in Spain into Latin, and the Alfonsine tables compiled under the aegis of Alfonso X in the thirteenth century were but a development of Arab astronomy.

<sup>1</sup> Tuhfat al-Nuzzar fi Gharaib al-Amsar wa-'Aja'ib al-Asfdr, cd. and tr. C. Defremery and B. R. Sanguinetti, 3rd impression (Paris, 1879-93)» ٧٠^ PP\* 39^\*9-

\* \$a'id, Tabaqat, p. 64. See ibn-l.lazm, vol. ii, pp. 7^'9> above, p. 375\*

- See above, p. 384.

Spanish Arab astronomers built upon the preceding astronomical and astrological works of their co-religionists in the East. They reproduced the Aristotelian system, as distinguished from the Ptolemaic, and in the name of Aristotle attacked the Ptolemaic representation of the celestial movements. Outstanding among early Hispano-Arabic astronomers were al-Majrîti <sup>1</sup> (f ca. 1007) of Cordova, al-Zarqâli (ca. 1029-ca. 1087) of Toledo and ibn-Aflah (f between 1140 and 1150) of Seville.

Abu-al-Qâsim Maslamah al-Majriti, the earliest Spanish Moslem scientist of any importance, edited and corrected the planetary tables (zîf) of al-Khwârizmi,<sup>2</sup> the first tables composed by a Moslem. He converted the basis of these tables from the era of Yazdagird into that of Islam and to some extent replaced the meridian of arzn by that of Cordova. In 1126 Adelard of Bath made a Latin version of

the tables ascribed to al-Khwarizmi. About fourteen years later another important zij, that of al-Battâni, composed about 900, was rendered into Latin by Plato of Tivoli and long afterwards done directly from Arabic into Spanish under the auspices of Alfonso X (f 1284), sur-named the Wise and the Astronomer. Among al-Majrîti's honorific titles was al-hasib, the mathematician, for he was considered a leader (imam) in mathematical knowledge, including mensuration. It was either he or his Cordovan disciple abu-al-Hakam 'Amr al-Karmâni<sup>3</sup> (f 1066) who introduced into Spain the writings of the Ikhwân al-Safâ'.

The so-called Toledan tables were based upon observations and studies made by a number of Spanish Moslem and Jewish astronomers, notable among whom was al-Zarqâli, abu-lshâq Ibrâhîm ibn-Yahya (f ca. 1087). These tables comprised geographical information derived from Ptolemy and al-Khwârizmi and were rendered into Latin in the twelfth century by Gerard of Cremona. The works of Raymond of Marseille were likewise largely drawn (1140) from the astronomical canons of al-Zarqâli. Ptolemy's exaggerated estimate of the length of the Mediterranean Sea as 62°, cut by al-Khwarizmi to about 52°, was reduced probably by al-Zarqâli to the approximately correct figure of 42°. Al-Zarqâli was evidently the foremost astronomical

<sup>1</sup> Born in Majrit (Madrid).

<sup>3</sup> \$a'id, p. 69, quoted by ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. ii, p. 39. Cf. Qiffi, p. 326. Çâ'id, who was himself an astronomer, criticizes al-Majriti.

' \$a'id, p. 71.

astrolabe, called the safihak? and was the first to prove the motion of the solar apogee with reference to the stars. According to his measurements it- amounted to  $12^{\circ}04'$ , whereas its real value is  $11.8^{\circ}$ . Copernicus quotes al-Zarqali (Arzachel) along with al-Battani in his book *De revolutombus orbzum coelestzum*.

In his *Kitab al-Hay ah\** (book of astronomy), which was also translated by Gerard of Cremona, Jabir ibn-Aflah (Geber filius Afflae) sharply criticizes Ptolemy and rightly asserts that the lower planets, Mercury and Venus, have no visible parallaxes. This book of ibn-Aflah is otherwise noteworthy for a chapter on spherical and plane trigonometry. About two and a half centuries before ibn-Aflah, al-Battani had popularized, if not discovered, the first notions of trigonometrical ratios as we use them today. The science of trigonometry, like algebra and analytical geometry, was largely founded by Arabs.

Foremost among the last Spanish astronomers stood Nur-al-Din abu-Ishaq al-Bitruji<sup>4</sup> (Alpetragius, f ca. 1204), a pupil of ibn-Tufayl. His *Kitab al-Hayah\** on the configuration of the heavenly bodies, is remarkable for its attempt to revive in a modified form the false theory of homocentric spheres. Though considered the exponent of a new astronomy, al-Bitruji in reality reproduced the Aristotelian system; his work marks the culmination of the Moslem anti-Ptolemaic movement. By the end of the twelfth century translations had been made from Arabic into Latin of a large number of Aristotle's works on astronomy, physics and meteorology, in which most of Aristotle's thought in geography had also found expression.

Arab astronomers have left on the sky immortal traces of their industry which everyone who reads the names of the stars on an ordinary celestial sphere can readily discern. Not

only are most of the star-names in European languages of Arabic origin, such as Acrab (^aqrab^ scorpion), Algedi (al-jadi, the kid), Altair (al-tair, the flyer), Deneb {dhanab, tail), Pherkad (jarqad, calf),<sup>6</sup> but a number of technical terms, including “azimuth”<sup>1</sup> \$a'id, p. 75. <sup>2</sup> Qifti, p- 57- Cf. Khwarizmi, Mafatih, pp. 233-4.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Qifti, p. 319, 1. 12, p. 393, 1. 1; Hajji Khalfah, vol. vi, p. 506. Like most other astronomical works this book has survived only in manuscript form.

<sup>4</sup> Of Pedroche, north of Cordova.

<sup>6</sup> Translated into Latin by Michael Scot in 1217 and into Hebrew in 1259.

<sup>6</sup> For more names consult Richard H. Allen, *Star-Names and their Meanings* (New York, 1899); Amin F. al-Ma'ICf, *al-Mujam al-Polakt* (Cairo, 1935)-

(al-sumut), “nadir” (nazlr), “zenith” (al-samf), are likewise of Arabic etymology and testify to the rich legacy of Islam to Christian Europe. In the mathematical vocabulary of Europe we have another eloquent witness to Arab scientific influence. Other than borrowings, as illustrated by such words as “algebra” and “algorism” cited above, certain Arabic terms were translated into Latin. The algebraic term “surd”, a sixteenth - century loan-word from Latin meaning “deaf”, is a translation from Arabic jadhr asamm (deaf root). In trigonometry “sine” (L. sinus') is likewise a translation of an Arabic word jayb (pocket), which is in turn an adaptation of Sanskrit/zm. The English mathematician Robert of Chester, who flourished in the middle of the twelfth century, was the first to use sinus as equivalent to Arabic jayb in its trigonometrical acceptance.

One of the most interesting mathematical terms borrowed from Arabic is “cipher”<sup>23</sup> or “zero”. While the Arabs, as we have learned, did not invent the cipher, they nevertheless introduced it with the Arabic numerals into Europe and taught Westerners the employment of this most convenient convention, thus facilitating the use of arithmetic in everyday life. In the numeral system the cipher is of capital importance. If in a series a unit, a ten or a power of ten is not represented “these little circles” are used “to keep the rows”.<sup>24</sup> Without the zero we should have to arrange our figures in a table with columns of units, tens, hundreds, etc., that is, use an abacus.

We have seen earlier that al-Khwarizmi, writing in the first half of the ninth century, was the first exponent of the use of numerals, including the zero, in preference to letters. These numerals he called Hindis indicating their Indian origin. His work on the Hindu method of calculation was translated into Latin by Adelard of Bath in the twelfth century and as *De numero indico* has survived, whereas the Arabic original has been lost. Moreover, the Moslems of Spain had developed as early as the second half of the ninth century numerals slightly different in shape, *huruf al-ghubar* (letters of dust), originally used in conjunction with some kind of sand abacus. Most

“code”, “monogram”, which is derived

scholars trace the *ghubar* numerals, like the Hindu, back to India; others claim that they were of Roman origin and were known in Spain before the advent of the Arabs.<sup>25</sup> Gerbert, who spent several years in Spain prior to his becoming Pope Sylvester II (999-1003), was the first to describe scientifically the *ghubar* numerals, his work appearing about a hundred years after the earliest Arabic manuscripts (874) containing such numerals. The modern

European numerals bear closer resemblance to the ghubar than to the Hindu figures.

The diffusion of the Arabic numerals in non-Moslem Europe was incredibly slow. Christian arithmeticians throughout the eleventh, twelfth and part of the thirteenth centuries persisted in the use of the antiquated Roman numerals and the abacus or made a compromise and used the new algorisms together with their old system. It was in Italy that the new symbols were first employed for practical purposes. In 1202 Leonardo Fibonacci of Pisa, who was taught by a Moslem master and had travelled in North Africa, published a work which was the main landmark in the introduction of the Arabic numerals. More than that, it marks the beginning of European mathematics. With the old type of numerals, arithmetical progress along certain lines would have been impossible. The zero and Arabic numerals lie behind the science of calculation as we know it today.

## Botany and medicine

In the field of natural history,<sup>26</sup> especially botany pure and applied, as in that of astronomy and mathematics, the Western Moslems enriched the world by their researches. They made correct observations on sexual difference between such plants as palms and hemps. They classified plants into those that grow from cuttings, those that grow from seed and those that grow spontaneously, as evidenced by ibn-Sab'in's answer to one of Emperor Frederick's questions.<sup>27</sup> The Cordova physician al-Ghafiqi,<sup>28</sup> abu-Ja'far Ahmad ibn-Muhammad (f 1165), collected plants in Spain and Africa, gave the name of each in Arabic, Latin and Berber, and described them in a way that may be considered the most precise and accurate in Arabic. His principal work al-Adwiyah al-Mufradah (on simples)<sup>29</sup> was not merely quoted but practically appropriated by his later and

better-known confrère and countryman, ibn-al-Baytâr. Towards the end of the twelfth century there flourished at Seville abu-Zakariyâ' Yahya ibn-Muhammad ibn-al-'Awwam, whose treatise on agriculture, al-Filahah, is not only the most important Islamic, but the outstanding medieval work on the subject. Derived partly from earlier Greek and Arabic sources and partly from the experience of Moslem husbandmen in Spain, this book treats of five hundred and eighty-five plants and explains the cultivation of more than fifty fruit trees. It presents new observations on grafting and the properties of soil and manure and discusses the symptoms of several diseases of trees and vines, suggesting methods of cure. But with all its importance this book was little known to Arab writers; neither ibn-Khallikân, Yâqût, nor Hâjji Khalfah knew it and ibn-Khaldûn<sup>30</sup> wrongly considers it a recension of ibn-Wahshiyah's.<sup>31</sup>

The best-known botanist and pharmacist of Spain, in fact of ibn-al-Moslem world, was "Abdullah ibn-Ahmad ibn-al-Baytar, a <sup>Baytar</sup> worthy successor of Dioscorides. Born at Malaga, ibn-al-Baytâr travelled as a herbalist in Spain and throughout North Africa and later entered the service of the Ayyûbid al-Malik al-Kâmil in Cairo as chief herbalist.<sup>32</sup> From Egypt he made extensive trips throughout Syria and Asia Minor. In 1248 he died in Damascus, leaving two celebrated works dedicated to his patron al-Salih Ayyûb, who, like his predecessor al-Kamil, used Damascus as his Syrian capital. One of these works, al-Mughnifi al-Adwiyah al-Mufradah, is on materia medica; the other, al-Jami fi al-

Medicine

Al-Zahrâwi

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Adwiyah al-Mufradah^ is a collection of "simple



remedies from the animal, vegetable and mineral worlds, embodying Greek and Arabic data supplemented by the author's own experiments and researches. It stands out as the foremost medieval treatise of its kind. Some 1400 items are considered, of which 300, including about 200 plants, were novelties. The number of authors quoted is about one hundred and fifty, of whom twenty were Greek. Parts of the Latin version of ibn-al-Baytâr's *Simplicia* were printed as late as 1758 at Cremona.

Most of the Spanish Arab physicians were physicians by avocation and something else by vocation. Ibn-Rushd, ibn-Maymûn, ibn-Bâjjah and ibn-Tufayl were better known as philosophers and will be treated on a later page. Ibn-al-Khatîb, whom we have already noted as a stylist and historian, held like many other physicians a vizirial office. In connection with the "black death", which in the middle of the fourteenth century was ravaging Europe and before which Christians stood helpless, considering it an act of God, this Moslem physician of Granada composed a treatise in defence of the theory of contagion, as may be illustrated by the following passage: [33](#) [34](#)

To those who say, "How can we admit the possibility of infection while the religious law denies it?" we reply that the existence of contagion is established by experience, investigation, the evidence of the senses and trustworthy reports. These facts constitute a sound argument. The fact of contagion becomes clear to the investigator who notices how he who establishes contact with the afflicted gets the disease, whereas he who is not in contact remains safe, and how transmission is effected through garments, vessels and earrings.

The greatest surgeon of the Arabs, who never produced many surgeons, was abu-al-Qâsim (Abulcasis) Khalaf ibn-

\*Abbas al-Zahrâwi [35](#) (f ca. 1013), court physician of al-Hakam II. His claim to distinction rests on al-Tasrij li-Man 'Ajaz 'an al-Tdalif<sup>x</sup> (an aid to him who is not equal to the large treatises), which in its last section sums up the surgical knowledge of his time. The work introduces or emphasizes such new ideas as cauterization of wounds, crushing a stone inside the bladder and the necessity of vivisection and dissection. This surgical part was translated into Latin by Gerard of Cremona and various editions were published at Venice in 1497, at Basel in 1541 and at Oxford in 1778.<sup>2</sup> It held its place for centuries as the manual of surgery in Salerno, Montpellier and other early schools of medicine. It contained illustrations of instruments which influenced other Arab authors and helped lay the foundations of surgery in Europe. A colleague of al-Zahrawi was Hasday ben-Shaprut, the Jewish minister and physician who translated into Arabic, with the collaboration of a Byzantine monk Nicholas, the splendid illustrated manuscript of the Materia medica of Dioscorides, which had been sent as a diplomatic present to 'Abd-al-Rahman III from the Byzantine Emperor Constantine VII.[36](#) [37](#) [38](#)

Al-Zahrawi's rank in the art of surgery was paralleled by that ibn-Zuhr of ibn-Zuhr in the science of medicine. Abu-Marwan 'Abd-al-Malik ibn-abi-al-'Ala', surnamed ibn-Zuhr[39](#) (L. through Heb. Avenzoar), was the most illustrious member of the greatest medical family of Spain. Ibn-Zuhr was born between 1091 and 1094 in Seville, where he died in 1162 after serving for many years as court physician and vizir to 'Abd-al-Mu'min, founder of the Muwahhid dynasty. His originality he showed by confining himself to authorship in the field of medicine, when his colleagues were spreading themselves over several branches of knowledge. Of the six medical works written by him three are extant. The most valuable is al-Taysir fi al-Mtcdawah w-al-Tadbir\* (the

facilitation of therapeutics and diet) written at the request of his friend and admirer ibn-Rushd as a counterpart to the latter's al-Kulliyat? The Taysir dealt with more specific topics than the Kulliyat. In his al-Kulliyat ibn-Rushd hails ibn-

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Zuhr as the greatest physician since Galen. At least he was the greatest clinician in Islam after al-Razi. Ibn-Zuhr has been often credited with being the first to discuss feeling in bones and to describe the itch mite (su abat al-jarab) but it has been recently shown that in his discovery of the itch mite he was anticipated by Ahmad al-Tabari (second half of tenth century) in his al-Mu'alajah al-Buqrtdlyahy

The ibn-Zuhr family produced about six generations of physicians in direct descent. After the above-mentioned abu-Marwán his son, abu-Bakr Muhammad (f 1198-9), was the most distinguished member. His distinction, however, was due more to his control of all branches of Arabic literature than to his medical activity. Several poems, including muwashshahs of great delicacy of sentiment, are ascribed to him.<sup>2</sup> The Muwah-hid abu-Yūsuf Ya'qūb al-Mansūr appointed him his physician at Marrákush, where he was poisoned by a jealous vizir. The caliph himself preached his funeral sermon. One of the early ibn-Zuhrs, a grandfather and namesake of abu-Marwan 'Abd-al-Malik, had practised medicine not only in Spain but in Baghdad, al-Qayrawan and Cairo.<sup>8</sup> Another Hispano-Arab physician who practised in the East was 'Ubaydullah ibn-al-Muzaffar al-Bahili of Almeria (al-Mariyah). Al-Báhili, a poet as well as physician, entered in 1127 the service of the Saljūq Mahmūd ibn-Maliksháh in Baghdad and provided him with a field hospital transported on forty camels.<sup>4</sup> He died at Damascus in 1154.

Transmission Europe

In the first centuries of Moslem domination in Spain, Eastern culture flowed from a higher level into Andalusia, as can be seen from al-Maqqari's<sup>5</sup> list of Spanish savants who journeyed "in quest of learning" to Egypt, Syria, al-Traq, Persia and even Transoxiana and China; but in the eleventh and following centuries the course was reversed, as illustrated by ibn-Zuhr and al-Báhili. Indeed^ the current became strong enough in the twelfth century to overflow into Europe. In the transmission of Arab medicine to Europe, north-western Africa and Spain, in particular Toledo, where Gerard of Cremona and Michael Scot

<sup>1</sup> Mohamed Rihab in Archiv für Geschichte der Medizin, vol. xix (1927), pp. 123-68.

<sup>2</sup> For specimens consult Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 625-8; ibn-Khallikán, vol. ii. pp. 375-6.

<sup>8</sup> \$a'id, p. 84, copied by ibn-abi-U\$aybi'ah, vol. ii, p. 64; ibn-Khallik m. vol. ii. PP- 376-7. <sup>4</sup> Maqqari, vol. i, p. 899. \* Vol. i, pp. 403-943.

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worked, played the leading part. The initiator of this significant movement of acquainting the West with the learning of the Arabs by means of Latin translation was Constantine the African (f 1087), who translated the theoretical part of 'Ali ibn-al-e Abbas' al-Kitab al-Maliki.<sup>1</sup> Born in Carthage of obscure origin, Constantine attached himself for some time to the medical school of Salerno, the first medical school of Europe, reputed by legend to have been founded by four masters, a Latin, a Greek, a Jew and a Saracen. To Constantine, to Gerard of Cremona (f 1187), translator of al-Zahrawi's Tasrif, al-Razi's al-Mansuri as well as ibn-Sina's al-Qaniin, and to Faraj ben-Salim

(Fararius, Faragut), the Sicilian Jew, who translated al-Razi's al-Hawi in 1279 and ibn-Jazlah's Taqwīm al-ʿAbdān, medieval Europe was chiefly indebted for its knowledge of Arabic medicine. Thereby were the three main medical traditions, Moslem, Jewish and Christian, at last brought into a position where they could be amalgamated. Through these and similar translations several Arabic technical terms were introduced into European languages. "Julep" (Ar. julab, from Pers, gulab, rose-water), for a medicinal aromatic drink; "rob" (Ar. rubb\ for a conserve of inspissated fruit juice with honey; and "syrup"<sup>2</sup> (Ar. sharab')^ a solution of sugar in water made according to an officinal formula and often medicated with some special therapeutic, may serve as an illustration. "Soda", which in medieval Latin meant headache and in the form sodanum headache remedy, comes ultimately from Arabic suda , splitting pain in the head. Certain medical terms were translated, as were certain mathematical terms. "Dura mater" and "pia mater" are Latin translations of Arabic al-umm al-jafiyah (the coarse mother) and al-umm al-raqlqah (the thin mother) respectively. Among several chemical terms which passed into European languages through Latin from Arabic works ascribed to Jabir ibn-Hayyan and other Moslem alchemists, we may note "alcohol",<sup>3</sup> "alembic",<sup>4</sup> "alkali" (al-qali}, "antimony",<sup>5</sup> "aludel",<sup>6</sup> "realgar"<sup>7</sup> and "tutty".<sup>8</sup>

The crowning achievement of the intellectual class of Arabs  
Philosophy

<sup>1</sup> The surgical part was done into Latin by a disciple of Constantine, John the

Saracen (1040-1103), a Salernitan physician. See above, p. 367; below, p. 663.

<sup>2</sup> For "sherbet" see above, p. 335.

<sup>2</sup> Ar. al-kuhl, whence Eng. “coal” possibly also comes.

<sup>4</sup> Ar. al-iniriq, originally Gr.      <sup>6</sup> Ar. ithmid, of Gr. origin.

- Ar. al-uthal, vessels.  
powder of the cave”.

- ’ Ar. rahj al-ghar, “the

- Ar. tutiya , from Skr.

in Spain was in the realm of philosophic thought. Here they formed the last and strongest link in the chain which transmitted Greek philosophy, as transmuted by them and their Eastern co-religionists, to the Latin West, adding their own contribution, especially in reconciling faith and reason, religion and science. To the Moslem thinkers Aristotle was truth, Plato was truth, the Koran was truth; but truth must be one. Hence arose the necessity of harmonizing the three, and to this task they addressed themselves. The Christian scholastics were faced by the same problem, but their task was rendered more difficult by the accumulation of dogmas and mysteries in their theology. Philosophy as developed by the Greeks and monotheistic religion as evolved by the Hebrew prophets were, as noted above, the richest legacies of the ancient West and of the ancient East. It is to the eternal glory of medieval Moslem thinkers of Baghdad and Andalusia that they reconciled these two currents of thought and passed them on harmonized into Europe. Their contribution was one of first magnitude, considering its effect upon scientific and philosophic thought and upon the theology of later times.

This influx into Western Europe of a body of new ideas, mainly philosophic, marks the beginning of the end of the “Dark Ages” and the dawn of the scholastic period. Kindled by contact with Arab thought and quickened by fresh acquaintance with ancient Greek lore, the interest of

Europeans in scholarship and philosophy led them on to an independent and rapidly developing intellectual life of their own, whose fruits we still enjoy.

## Ben-Gabîrôl

Among the earliest philosophers of Arabic Spain was Solomon ben-Gabirol<sup>40</sup> (Avicebron, Avencebrol), a Jew. Solomon was born at Malaga about 1021 and died in Valencia about 1058. As the first great teacher of Neo-Platonism in the West, ben-Gabirol is often referred to as the Jewish Plato. Like ibn-Masarra<sup>41</sup> before him he was an advocate of the system of philosophy fathered on Empedocles. A thousand years before his time Platonic philosophy had been Orientalized by Philo, the Hellenistic Jewish philosopher of Alexandria, preparatory to its Christianization and Islamization, and now in the form of Greco-Moslem philosophy it was re-Occidentalized by ben-Gabîrôl and restored to Europe. Ben-Gabîrôl's main work was Yanbü al-Hayâh (the fount of life).<sup>42</sup> Translated into Latin in 1150 as Fons vitae, it played a part in medieval scholasticism and inspired the Franciscan school.

The twelfth was the greatest century in the history of philosophical thought in Moslem Spain. The century opens with abu-<sup>Bajjah</sup> Bakr Muhammad ibn-Yahya ibn-Bâjjah (Avenpace, Avempace), philosopher, scientist, physician, musician and commentator on Aristotle, who flourished in Granada and Saragossa and died at Fas in 1138. Ibn-Bâjjah wrote several treatises on astronomy in which he criticized Ptolemy's assumptions and thus prepared the way for ibn-Tufayl and al-Bitrûji, other treatises on materia medica which were quoted by ibn-al-Baytâr, and still others on medicine which exerted a powerful influence over ibn-Rushd.<sup>43</sup> But his most important work, the only one extant besides a farewell letter to a friend, is a philosophical treatise entitled Tadbîr al-

Mutawahhid (De regimine solitarii, the régime of the solitary), which has been preserved only in a Hebrew abstract. The aim of this book is to demonstrate how man unaided may attain to union with the Active Intellect, and to teach that the gradual perfection of the human spirit through union with the diyine is the object of philosophy. Moslem biographers considered ibn-Bâjjah an atheist.<sup>44</sup>

Ibn-Bâjjah's philosophic ideas were carried a step further by abu-Bakr<sup>45</sup> Muhammad ibn-'Abd-al-Malik ibn-Tufayl,<sup>46</sup> the Neo-Platonic philosopher who practised medicine at Granada and later became adviser and chief royal physician to the Muwah-hid abu-Ya'qub Yusuf (1163-84)—a combination of functions not unusual in a Moslem state. In 1182 he resigned his position as court physician and was succeeded by his younger philosopherfriend ibn-Rushd, whom he had recommended to the caliph. These two luminaries shed imperishable lustre on the court of the early Muwahhids, a dynasty puritanic in theology but liberal in its patronage of philosophy. Born in the first decade of this

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century, ibn-Tufayl died in 1185 in the Muwahhid capital Marrâkush, where his second patron the Caliph abu-Yusuf al-Mansûr (1184-99) attended the obsequies. His masterpiece was an original philosophic romance entitled Hayy ibn-Yaqzân (the living one, son of the vigilant),<sup>1</sup> whose underlying idea was that human capacity unassisted by external agency may attain to the knowledge of the higher world and may find out by degrees its dependence upon a Supreme Being. This story, one of the most delightful and original in the literature of the Middle Ages, was first translated into Latin by Edward Pococke, the younger (1671),<sup>2</sup> and then into most European languages, including Dutch (1672), Russian (1920) and Spanish (1934).



Some have sought in it an original of Robinson Crusoe. The theory it develops is evolutionary. Ibn-Tufayl borrowed his characters' names from ibn-Sina's short and lifeless tale of the same title, but drew his inspiration from earlier authors beginning with al-Fârâbi.

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Ru.^hd

The greatest Moslem philosopher, judged by his influence especially over the West, was the Hispano-Arab astronomer, physician and Aristotelian commentator abu-al-Walid Muhammad ibn-Ahmad ibn-Rushd (Averroès). Ibn-Rushd was born in Cordova in 1126, and belonged to a distinguished family which had produced several theologians and qâdis. In 1169- 71 he himself was qâdi of Seville and two years later of Cordova. In 1182 he was called to Marrakesh by abu-Ya'qûb Yûsuf to replace ibn-Tufayl as court physician. Yûsuf's son and successor al-Mansûr banished ibn-Rushd in 1194 on a suspicion of heresy due to his studies in philosophy, but later recalled him to his office in Marrâkush, where he died soon afterwards, on December 10, 1198.<sup>3</sup> His remains were later removed to Cordova.

Ibn-Rushd's chief contribution to medicine was an encyclopædic work entitled al-Kulliyât\* fi al-Tibb (generalities on medicine), in which the fact is recognized that no one is taken twice with smallpox and the function of the retina is well under-

<sup>1</sup> I.e. the intellect of man derived from the divine intellect.

<sup>4</sup> The translation was published in Oxford together with the Ar. text edited by Edward Pococke, the elder. Several

editions of the Ar. text appeared in Cairo and Constantinople in 1299. There is only one critical edition, that of Léon Gauthier (Algiers, 1900; Beirut, 1936) with a Fr. translation.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. ii, pp. 76-7; ibn-abi-Zar', vol. i, pp. 135-6; ibn-Khal-likân, vol. iii, p. 467.

<sup>4</sup> Corrupted into L. Colliget, not related etymologically to colligo, to collect. stood. But ibn-Rushd, the physician, was entirely eclipsed by ibn-Rushd, the philosopher and commentator. His chief philosophical work, other than his commentaries, was his Tahajut al-Tahafut<sup>x</sup> (the incoherence of the incoherence), a reply to al-Ghazzali's attack on rationalism entitled Tahafut al-Falasifah (the incoherence of the philosophers <sup>2</sup>). It was this work for which ibn-Rushd was best known, and unfavourably so, in the Moslem world. In the Jewish and Christian worlds, however, he was known primarily as a commentator on Aristotle. A medieval commentator, we should recall, was an author who composed a scientific or philosophic work using some earlier writing as a background and framework. Accordingly ibn-Rushd's commentaries were a series of treatises using in part the titles of Aristotle's works and paraphrasing their contents. As ibn-Rushd knew no Greek he was content to rely on translations made by his predecessors in Baghdad. His chief commentaries on Aristotle were a short Ja/mi (summary), an intermediate Talkhîs (resume) and a long Tafsir or Sharh (commentary).<sup>3</sup> Most of ibn-Rushd's commentaries have been preserved in Hebrew translations or in Latin translations from the Hebrew. Only a few have survived in Arabic and even these are generally in Hebrew script.<sup>4</sup>

Last of the great Arabic-writing philosophers, ibn-Rushd produced no progeny in Islam. He belonged more to Christian Europe than to Moslem Asia or Africa. To the West he became “the commentator”<sup>5</sup> as Aristotle was “the teacher”. Though using in most instances a Latin translation of a Hebrew rendition of an Arabic commentary upon an Arabic translation of a Syriac translation of a Greek original, the minds of the Christian schoolmen and scholars of medieval Europe were agitated by ibn-Rushd’s Aristotle as by no other author. From the end of the twelfth to the end of the sixteenth century Averroism remained the dominant school of thought, and that in spite of the orthodox reaction it created first among the Moslems in Spain, then among the Talmudists and finally among the Christian clergy.

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Maurice Bouyges (Beirut 1930); tr. S. Van Den Bergh, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1954).

<sup>2</sup> Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic; views stated in his *Maqasidal-Falasifah* (Cairo, 1331).

<sup>3</sup> For a complete list consult Ernest Renan, *Averroes el l’averroisme*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1861), pp. 58-79; Sarton, *Introduction*, vol. ii, pp. 356-61.

<sup>4</sup> His *Talkhis Kitab al-Maqiildt*, a resume of Aristotle’s *Categories*, has been edited by Maurice Bouyges (Beirut, 1932).

<sup>6</sup> Or to quote Dante, “Averrois che il gran comento feo”, *Inferno*, canto iv, 1. 144.

Ibn-Rushd was a rationalist and claimed the right to submit everything save the revealed dogmas of faith to the

judgment of reason, but he was not a free-thinker or unbeliever. His view of creation by God was evolutionary: not a matter of days but of eternity. Earlier Moslem Aristotelians had taken for genuine a number of apocryphal works, including some of Neo-Platonic character; ibn-Rushd's philosophy involved a return to purer and more scientific Aristotelianism. After being purged of objectionable matter by ecclesiastical authorities, his writings became prescribed studies in the University of Paris and other institutions of higher learning. With all its excellences and all the misconceptions collected under its name, the intellectual movement initiated by ibn-Rushd continued to be a living factor in European thought until the birth of modern experimental science.

Ibn-

Maymün

For first place after ibn-Rushd among the philosophers of the age the only candidate is his Jewish contemporary and fellow Cordovan abu-'Imran Musa ibn-Maymun (Heb. Mosheh ben-Maimon,<sup>1</sup> L. Maimonides), the most famous of the Hebrew physicians and philosophers of the whole Arabic epoch. Ibn-Maymun was born in Cordova in 1135,<sup>2</sup> but his family left the country as a result of the Muwahhid persecution and settled in Cairo about 1165. The claim of al-Qifti<sup>3</sup> and ibn-abī-Usaybi'ah<sup>4</sup> that in Spain ibn-Maymun professed Islam in public but practised Judaism in secret has recently been subjected to sharp criticism. In Cairo he became the court physician of the celebrated Salah-al-Din and of his son al-Malik al-'Aziz. From

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1177 on he held the chief religious office of the Jewish community<sup>5</sup> at Cairo, where he died in 1204. In accordance with his will his body was carried by hand over the route once taken by Moses and buried in Tiberias, where his unpretentious tomb is still visited by throngs of pilgrims. Ailing people among the poor Jews of modern Egypt still seek their cure by spending the night in the underground chamber of the synagogue of Rabbi Mosheh ben-Maimon in Cairo.

Ibn-Maymun distinguished himself as astronomer, theologian, physician and above all as philosopher. His medical science was

<sup>1</sup> Also referred to as Mosheh haz-zlmdn, "the Moses of his time". A popular Jewish saying, "From Moses to Moses there was none like Moses [Maimonides]", expresses the eminent position he has ever held in Jewish estimation.

<sup>a</sup> His eight-hundredth anniversary was observed throughout the civilized world. • Pp. 318-19. <sup>4</sup> Vol. ii, p. 117. ' Ar. ra's al-millah, Heb. ndgtd. the standard Galenism of his time derived from al-Razi, ibn-Sina and ibn-Zuhr and enlivened by rational criticism based on personal observation. Ibn-Maymun improved the method of circumcision, ascribed hemorrhoids to constipation, prescribing for them a light diet predominantly vegetarian, and held advanced ideas on hygiene. His most popular medical work was al-Fusulfi al-Tibb (aphorisms of medicine). His leading philosophical work bore the title Dalalat al-Ha irln<sup>1</sup> (the guide of the perplexed); in this he tried to reconcile Jewish theology with Moslem Aristotelianism or, in broader terms, faith with reason. Prophetic visions he explained as psychical experiences. To this extent at least he stood as the champion of scientific thought against biblical "fundamentalism" and aroused the anger of conservative

theologians, who referred to his book as *Dalalah* (misguidance, error). His philosophic ideas resembled those of *ibn-Rushd*, though developed independently. Like *ibn-Rushd* he knew no Greek and depended entirely on Arabic translations. The theory of creation which he propounded, but did not share, was the atomistic one as distinguished from the two others held by the Arabic-writing thinkers, namely, the fundamentalist theory, which made God creator of everything, and the philosophical, which was Neo-Platonic and Aristotelian. His works, with one major exception, were written in Arabic, but in Hebrew characters, and were soon translated into Hebrew and later in part into Latin. Their influence, far-reaching in space and time, was exerted mainly over Jews and Christians. Down to the eighteenth century they remained the principal medium through which Jewish thought reached the Gentiles. Modern critics detect traces of that influence in the Dominicans, as attested by the works of *Albertus Magnus*, in *Albertus'* rival, *Duns Scotus*, in *Spinoza* and even in *Kant*.

The ruling mystic of the age was another Hispano-Arab, *abu-Bakr Muhammad ibn-'Ali Muhyi-al-Din ibn-'Arabi*,<sup>2</sup> the greatest speculative genius of Islamic Sufism. *Ibn- Arabi* was born in *Murcia (Mursiyah)* in 1165 and flourished mainly in *Seville* until 1201-2, when he made the holy pilgrimage, after

*Ibn-'Arabi*, the mystic

<sup>1</sup> Edited in Hebrew characters and translated into French by *Salomon Munk* 3 vols. (Paris, 1856-66).

<sup>2</sup> In the East he is generally known as *ibn-'Arabi* to distinguish him from his fellow countryman and traditionist *abu-Bakr ibn-al-'Arabi*. Among his *msbahs*

he bore al-Hatimi al-Ta'i. implying descent from Hatim al-Ta'i

c86 THE ARABS IN EUROPE: SPAIN AND SICILY part IV which he remained in the East till his death at Damascus in 1240.<sup>1</sup> There his tomb, enshrined in a mosque, is still standing. The twelfth century witnessed in the East the beginnings of a vast organization of Moslem religious life corresponding to the monastic orders in medieval Christendom, and ibn-Arabi, who represented the illuministic (ishraqi) or pseudo-Empedoclean, Neo-Platonic and pantheistic school founded by ibn-Masarraḥ and ben-Gablrol, was the man to give this Sufi movement its framework of speculative philosophy. The greatest exponent of this school in the East was al-Suhrawardi (f 1191), whose Persian origin and emphasis on the metaphysics of light reveal Manichaeo-Zoroastrian influence and whose major work was Hikmat al-Ishraq (wisdom of illumination). The illuministic school was so called because, according to its mystical theory, God and the world of spirits should be interpreted as light and our process of cognition as an illumination from above through the intermediary of the spirits of the spheres.<sup>2</sup> To his followers ibn-'Arabi was al-shaykh al-akbar, the grand master. His system is embedded in an enormous mass of writings,<sup>3</sup> of which the most influential are al-Futuhdt al-Makkiyah\* (the Makkan revelations) and Fusils al-Hikam<sup>5</sup> (the bezels of wise precepts). It is in chapter 167 of the Futuhdt,<sup>6</sup> headed "Kimiya' al-Sa'adah" (the alchemy of happiness), which contains an esoteric allegory of the ascension of man to heaven, and in another work still unpublished, entitled al-Isra ila Maqam al-Asra (the nocturnal journey toward the station of the Most Magnanimous One), where he develops the theme of the Prophet's ascension to the seventh heaven, that ibn-'Arabi anticipates Dante.<sup>7</sup>

In jurisprudence ibn-'Arabi nominally belonged to the Zahiri (literalist) school of his compatriot ibn-Hazm; in matters of speculative belief he passed for a batini (esoteric);<sup>8</sup> in philosophic theory he was a pantheistic monist, as his doctrine wahdat al-wujild (the unity of existence) justly proclaims him. His central theme was that things pre-exist as ideas (aydn t habit a Ji)

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-al-Jawzi, *Mirai al-Zamdn*, ed. James R. Jewett (Chicago, 1907), p. 487; Maqqari, vol. i, p. 567; Kutubi, vol. ii, p. 301; al-Sha'rani, *al-Yawdqit wal-Jawdhir* (Cairo, 1905), p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Consult Hajji Khalfah, vol. iii, pp. 87 seq.-, Carra de Vaux in *Journal asiatique*, ser. 9, vol. xix (1902), pp. 63-94.

<sup>3</sup> Of the 289 works credited to him Brockelmann, vol. i, pp. 442-8, lists 150 as

existing at the present day. <sup>4</sup> 2nd ed., 4 vols. (Bulaq, 1293)\*  
<sup>6</sup> (Bulaq, 1252).

Vol. ii, pp. 3C6-75. ' See above, p. 114. <sup>8</sup> Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 569 seq. in the knowledge of God, whence they emanate and whither they return. There is no creation ex nihilo\ the world is merely the outer aspect of God, who is its inner aspect. Between the Essence and its attributes, i.e. God and the universe, there is no real difference. Here Moslem mysticism passes into pantheism. The divine manifests itself in the human, and the perfect man (al-insan al-kamil} is, of course, Muhammad. Muhammad is also the kalimah, the logos, as Jesus was. The true mystic, in the judgment of ibn-'Arabi, has but one guide, the inner light, and will find God in all religions.<sup>1</sup>



The influence of the illuministic school, whose greatest Spanish representative ibn-'Arabi was, is manifest not only in Persian and Turkish Sufi circles<sup>2</sup> but in the so-called Augustinian scholastics such as Duns Scotus, Roger Bacon and Raymond Lull.<sup>3</sup> Another Murcian, abu-Muhammad 'Abd-al-Haqq ibn-Sab'in (ca. 1217-69), stood for the same type of thinking and writing as ibn-'Arabi. His pre-eminence in Sufi circles won him the enviable title Qutb-al-Din (the pole of religion). But he is best known for the answers he wrote, al-Ajwibah, 'an al-As'ilah al-Siqilliyah (answers to the Sicilian questions), to the learned questions on the eternity of matter, the nature and immortality of the soul, the object of theology and the like asked by Frederick II of Hohenstaufen and transmitted by the Muwahhid 'Abd-al-Wahid al-Rashid (1232-42). Ibn-Sab'in, who was then residing at Ceuta, answered at some length in terms of Islamic orthodoxy and offered to set the Christian emperor of Sicily right in a personal interview. In the meantime he refused the reward of money which accompanied the questionnaire. Ibn-Sab'in's other leading work is Asrar al-Hikmah al-Mashriqiyah (the mysteries of illuministic philosophy), still unpublished. He was one of the rare Moslems in history who committed suicide, and that by opening a vein in his wrist while sojourning in Makkah.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-'Arabi, Tarjuman al-Ashwaq, ed. and tr. Nicholson (London, 1911), pp. 19, 67.

<sup>2</sup> The greatest of the Sufi poets, Jalal-al-Din al-Rumi, who died some thirty years after ibn-'Arabi, was linked to the latter through one of ibn-'Arabi's pupils.

<sup>3</sup> In his *El Islam cristianizado* (Madrid, 1931), Asin develops the thesis that Moslem Sufism as represented by ibn-'Arabi was consciously or unconsciously an imitation of Christian monastic mysticism.

<sup>4</sup> Still unpublished. See M. Amari, *Biblioteca Arabo-Szcula* (Leipzig, 1855-7), pp. 573-7: in *Journal asiatique*, ser. 5, vol. i (1853), pp. 240-74- See also A. F. Mehren, loc. cit. vol. xiv (1879), pp. 341-454.

\* Kutubi, vol. i, p. 316.

## THE ARABS IN EUROPE: SPAIN AND SICILY part iv

Toledo, centre of translation

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In the process of transmitting the treasures of Arabic erudition into the West, Toledo, which maintained its position after the Christian conquest in 1085 as an important centre of Islamic learning, acted as the main channel. Here through the initiative of Archbishop Raymond I (1126-52) arose a regular school for translation. In it a series of translators flourished from about 1135 to 1284. Scholars were attracted from various parts of Europe, including the British Isles, whence hailed Michael Scot and Robert of Chester.<sup>47</sup> In 1145 Robert made the first translation of al-Khwarizmi's algebra; in 1143 he had completed with Hermann the Dalmatian for Peter the Venerable the first Latin translation of the Koran. It was also in Toledo that the first school of Oriental studies in Europe was established, in 1250, by the Order of Preachers with a view to preparing missionaries to Moslems and Jews.

The name of Adelard of Bath, who is said to have visited Spain at this time, is one of the greatest in English science before Roger Bacon. After sojourning in Sicily and Syria Adelard turned into Latin in 1126 the astronomical tables of al-Majriti, which were based on those of al-Khwarizmi and included tables of sines. He translated a number of other

mathematical and astronomical treatises and became the first of a long line of English Arabists. The Scotsman Michael Scot (f ca. 1236), one of the founders of Latin Averroism, studied and worked in Spain before becoming court astrologer to Frederick II of Sicily. In Toledo he translated among several other works al-Bitruji's astronomy, al-Hayah, and Aristotle's *De coelo et mundo* with ibn-Rushd's commentary; in Sicily he translated other Arabic books which he dedicated to Frederick. The most important of these was ibn-Sina's version of Aristotle's zoology, *Abbreviatio Avicenne de animalibus*. But the most prolific of the Toledan translators was Gerard of Cremona, who before his death in 1187 had rendered into Latin al-Farghani's version of Ptolemy's *Almagest*, al-Farabi's commentary on Aristotle, Euclid's *Elements* and various treatises of Aristotle, Galen and Hippocrates—in all seventy-one Arabic works.

As we have seen, Jews, both orthodox and converted, played a major role in this work of translation. One of the earliest among them was Abraham ben-Ezra of Toledo (j\* 1167), a distinguished biblical commentator who translated two treatises on astrology by his earlier co-religionist of the East, Máshá'alláh<sup>1</sup> (j- 815). He also translated al-Birüni's commentary on al-Khwarizmi's tables. Ben-Ezra's contemporary, John of Seville (Joannes Hispalensis, often confused with a Mozarab Christian), a baptized Jew, flourished in Toledo about 1135-53 under the patronage of Archbishop Raymond and translated works on arithmetic, astronomy and astrology, medicine and philosophy by al-Farghani, abu-Ma'shar, al-Kindi, ben-Gabirol and al-Ghazzali. Of these the most important was al-Farghani's astronomy. John presumably translated from Arabic into the vernacular, Castilian, and an associate put the Castilian into Latin.

By the close of the thirteenth century Arabic science and philosophy had been transmitted to Europe, and Spain's

work as an intermediary was done. The intellectual avenue leading from the portals of Toledo through the Pyrenees wound its way through Provence and the Alpine passes<sup>2</sup> into Lorraine, Germany and Central Europe as well as across the Channel into England.<sup>3</sup> Among the cities of southern France deserving mention are Marseille, where Raymond in 1140 drew up planetary tables based on those of Toledo; Toulouse, where Hermann the Dalmatian completed in 1143 al-Majriti's translation of Ptolemy's *Planispharium*; Narbonne, where Abraham ben-Ezra translated in 1160 al-Birüni's commentary on al-Khwa-rizmi's tables; and Montpellier, which in the thirteenth century became the chief centre of medical and astronomical studies in France. In eastern France Cluny, whose famous abbey housed a number of Spanish monks, was during the twelfth century a significant focus for the diffusion of Arab learning. Its abbot, Peter the Venerable, sponsored (1141-3) the first Latin translation of the Koran, besides various pamphlets directed against Islam. Arabic science, introduced into Lorraine (Lotharingia) in the tenth century, made that region a centre of scientific influence in the following two centuries, Liège, Gorze and Cologne, among other Lotharingian cities, provided the most fertile soil for the germination of Arab learning. From Lorraine it radiated into other parts of Germany and was transported

<sup>1</sup> Mentioned in Fihrist, p. 273.  
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<sup>2</sup> See below, p.

- The first book printed in England, *The Dictes and Sayengis of the Philosophres* by William Caxton at Westminster in 1477, was based on *Mukhtár al-Hikam wa-Mahdsin al-Kalim*, by a Syro-Egyptian prince abu-al-Wáfá' Mubashshir ibn-Fátik, fl. 1053 (ed. 'Abd-al-Rafimán Badawi, Madrid, 1958).

590 THE ARABS IN EUROPE: SPAIN AND SICILY PART IV into Norman England by men born or educated in Lorraine. Embassies between German kings in the north and Moslem rulers in Spain were frequent and intellectually fruitful. As early

From Ameer Ali, "A Short History of the Saracens"  
{Macmillan & Co., Ltd.)

#### PAVILION IN THE COURT OF LIONS, ALHAMBRA, GRANADA

as 953 Otto the Great, king of the Germans, sent as an envoy a Lotharingian monk, John by name, who resided in Cordova for nearly three years, probably learned Arabic and brought back with him scientific manuscripts.<sup>1</sup> Thus did Spanish Arabic learning permeate all Western Europe.

<sup>1</sup> "Vita Johannis abbatis Gorziensis", G. H. Pertz, Monumenta Germania historica, scriptores rerum Germanicarum, vol. iv, pp. 337'77«

#### CHAPTER XLI

#### ART AND ARCHITECTURE

The Arabs in Spain carried on almost all the minor and practical Minor arts developed by Moslems in other lands. In metal-work<sup>48</sup> arts involving decoration, raising patterns in relief or engraving them, inlaying with gold and silver<sup>49</sup> and inscribing characters, the Hispano-Moresque school excelled. One of the earliest specimens is a relic of Hisham II (976-1009) preserved on the high altar of the Cathedral of Gerona in the form of a wooden casket sheathed with silver-gilt plating patterned in repousse with scroll-like foliation. It

bears an Arabic inscription stating that' it is the work of two craftsmen, Badr and Tarlf, and was made for a courtier of al-Hakam II (961-76) as a present for the heir apparent, Hisham. In metal-work such as cutlery, sword blades and astrolabes Toledo and Seville<sup>50</sup> were especially noted. Next to damascene blades, toledos had the finest temper and the greatest elasticity. The astrolabe, an astronomical instrument of ancient Greek invention, was perfected by the Moslems and introduced into Europe in the tenth century. Besides its use to determine the hour of prayer and the geographical position of Makkah, the astrolabe was invaluable to mariners for nautical observations and was a necessary adjunct of the astrologer's equipment. In the story told by the tailor in the Arabian Nights (no. 29), the glib barber exasperates his customer by trying to find with an astrolabe the precise moment auspicious for shaving. A properly executed astrolabe is a beautiful work of art.

Enamelling found no high favour with Moslem metal-workers, Ceramics but in the application of coloured glazes to earthenware, Moslems were from an early period past masters. Valencia was the Moslem centre of this industry in the West. The importation of its products laid the foundation of the pottery industry at Poitiers.

European association of the work with

<sup>8</sup> Maqqari, vol. i, p. 124.

In the fifteenth century we find imitations of this Moslem pottery produced as far north as Holland. From Spain the industry was meanwhile introduced into Italy. Its influence is noticeable in the later Spanish vessels, with their pseudo-Arabic inscriptions and Christian heraldic devices. In other forms of ceramics, as well as mosaics, especially tile and blue faience, the Spanish Moslem school distinguished itself.

The various kinds of coloured tiles still favourites in Spain and Portugal are a legacy from the Arabs, as the name *azulejo*\* suggests. In the eyes of modern collectors the Mudejar lustre pottery ranks only below the Chinese. Exquisite pottery was manufactured in Toledo and Cordova as early as the third quarter of the eleventh century, after which Calatayud (Qal'at Ayyub),<sup>51 52</sup> Malaga and above all Manises in Valencia became famous for this ware. In the manufacture and colouring of glass, however, Spain could not compete with Syria.

## Textiles

In the development of the sumptuous textile arts which made the Arabic-speaking peoples the leading fabric-makers and silk mercers in the medieval world, the Arabs of Spain had a share;<sup>53</sup> but in carpet-making Spain offered no serious competition to the Eastern, especially Persian, market. Cordova was a centre of the weaving industry. Almería is said to have had four thousand eight hundred looms.<sup>54</sup> Just as al-Mawsil exported to Italy the fabric known there as *mussolina*, whence our “muslin”, and Baghdad supplied the same market with the rich silk cloth bearing the Italianized name *baldacco* and with the silken canopies, “*baldachin*”,<sup>55</sup> suspended over the altars in many Western churches, so did Granada in later times supply the European dress shops with *grenadines*. Such Oriental silk textiles, with their rich colouring and floral and geometrical designs, were in limited demand for church vestments, for wrapping relics of saints<sup>6</sup> and for aristocratic and royal robes. As the importation of finely wrought stuffs from Moslem lands increased in Europe, Western enterprise saw in this industry a potential source of wealth and began to set up looms in various

Photo: Casa Moreno

## CARVED IVORY CASKET

Made in Cordova, A.D. 964, and now in the Museo Arqueológico, Madrid

centres of France and Italy. In these early factories some Moslem workmen were undoubtedly at first employed.

As in metal- and glass-work, pottery, architecture and other departments of decorative art, so in textiles we have between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries numerous examples of European work bearing the stamp of Islamic style. In fact, as early as the twelfth century the adoption of Islamic designs by European weavers became frequent, and from that time on we have numerous illustrations of the use of meaningless imitation of Arabic script merely for decorative purposes. We should also remember that in Spain, and to a greater extent in Sicily, Oriental workmen lingered long after Islam had receded; hence the combination of Christian and Islamic elements in the forms of art and architecture known as Mudejar and the Islamic features in the Sicilian art and architecture of the Norman period. Mudejar workmen excelled in woodwork, pottery and textiles. To this day the Spanish carpenter uses in his trade words that are largely Arabic.

In ornament executed in relief the Spanish Arab carvers and modellers followed the same system of design that

governed their practice in flat surface decoration and other modes of technical expression. In the tenth century a school of ivorycarvers centred at Cordova and produced many beautiful caskets and boxes made partly or wholly of ivory and decorated with carved, inlaid or painted ornaments. Some of the ornaments represented musical performances



and hunting-scenes illustrating the use of animal forms as a decorative motif. Such containers were often used as jewel cases and perfume or sweetmeat boxes. The inscriptions they bear indicate that they were often intended as gifts. One of the finest examples of this work is a cylindrical casket made in A.H. 353 (964), as the inscription round the domed lid reads, for the Caliph al-Hakam II as a gift to his wife.

vories

The sides are entirely covered with palmettes in addition to peacocks and other birds.

## Architecture

All monuments of religious art in Spain have perished with the exception of one of the earliest and grandest, the great Mosque of Cordova. The foundation was laid by ʿAbd-al-Rah-

Photo: Arextv Mas

## INTERIOR OF THE GREAT MOSQUE OF CORDOVA

man I in 786 on the site of a Christian church which was originally a Roman temple.<sup>1</sup> The main part of the mosque was completed in 793 by his son Hisham I, who added the square minaret. The Spanish minarets followed the African style, which was of Syrian origin (above, p. 452). Additions to the Cordova mosque were made by Hisham's successors. Twelve hundred and ninety-three columns, a veritable forest, supported its roof. Brass lanterns made from Christian bells<sup>2</sup> illuminated the building. "One chandelier held a thousand lights; the smallest held <sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 508-9. •

Cf. above, p. 533. twelve.”<sup>1</sup> For the decoration of the building Byzantine craftsmen were employed, as they may have been employed in the Umayyad mosques of Syria.<sup>2</sup> Eighty thousand gold pieces from the spoils of the Goths were spent on the structure by its founder. Enlargements and repairs were made on it down to al-Hajib al-Mansür (977-1000). Today it is a cathedral to the Virgin of the Assumption.

Of the secular monuments the Alcázar<sup>3</sup> of Seville and the Alhambra of Granada, with their profuse but graceful decorations, are the most superb remains. Of Madinat al-Zahra’, now called Córdoba la Vieja, built by ‘Abd-al-Rahman III and his successors with columns imported from Rome, Constantinople and Carthage, very little has been left to show its former splendour. It is noteworthy that the caliph set up over the gateway a statue of his favourite concubine, whose name the palace bore. He is, moreover, said to have brought for it from Constantinople a fountain decorated with human figures. On the occasion of the Berber revolt of 1010 the Madinah was sacked and set on fire. About the same time the similarly named villa of al-Mansur, al-Madinah al-Zahirah, which lay to the east of Cordova, was likewise destroyed by the Berbers and has now entirely disappeared.

The oldest part of the Alcázar of Seville was built by a Toledan architect for the Muwahhid governor in 1199-1200. It was restored in the Moslem style by Mudejar workmen for King Peter the Cruel in 1353 and was used until a few years ago as a royal residence. Among the many Alcázars in Cordova, Toledo and other Spanish towns, this of Seville is the most renowned and the only one surviving. Seville boasts another Muwahhid monument, the Giralda tower, originally the minaret of the great mosque. Erected in 1184, this minaret was decorated with cusped arcading, anticipating later Gothic tracery.

The Hispano-Moslem system of decoration reached its culminating point in the Nasrid palace Alhambra.<sup>4</sup> This acropolis of Granada, with its excessive decoration in mosaics, stalactites and inscriptions, was conceived and constructed on so extensive and magnificent a scale that it has been accepted as the last

1 'Umari, *Masálik al-Absár fi Mamálik al-Am;ár*, ed. Ahmad Zaki, vol. i (Cairo, 1927) Cf<sup>P</sup>above, pp. 264, 265. ' For etymology see above, p 107 n 2.

<sup>4</sup> For the best reproduction«? consult the illustrations in Albert F. Calvert, *The Alhambra*, 2nd ed. (London, 1907).

word in such workmanship. Begun by Muhammad I al-Ghalib about 1248, its construction was completed by abu-al-Hajjaj

Front Arnold and Guillaume, "The Legacy of Islam," by courtesy of the Clarendon Press

THE HALL OF THE AMBASSADORS IN THE ALCÁZAR, SEVILLE

With coloured tiles representing Mudejar workmanship

Yusuf (1333-54) and by his successor Muhammad V al-Ghani (1354-9). Most of the interior decoration is ascribed by the

inscriptions on the walls to abu-al-Hajjaj. The most celebrated portion is the Court of Lions. In the centre of this court twelve marble lions stand in a circle, each spouting a jet of water from its mouth. Among the surrounding profusion of decoration these lions, together with the ceiling of the so-called Hall of Justice, are the most important monuments of art. The ceiling depicts scenes painted on leather illustrating tales of chivalry and hunting episodes,

besides ten rulers seated on an oval bench. Certain inscriptions embody al-Ghalib's motto, wa-la ghahb tlla Allah (but there is no conqueror other than Allah); others, employed for decorative purposes only, are represented as addressing the visitor in their function of ornament.

The horseshoe form of arch, which became characteristic of The arch Western Moslem architecture, was represented in northern Syria, Ctesiphon and other places even before Islam. The pointed arc , which later became the distinctive feature of Western Gothic architecture, appears first in Islam in the Umayyad Mosque of Damascus and Qusayr 'Amrah? The round horseshoe variety was used at the Umayyad Mosque of Damascus. This last two which in the West became known as the Moorish arch, undoubtedly existed in Spain before the Arab conquest, but it was the Spanish, more particularly the Cordovan Moslems, who realized its structural and decorative possibilities and adopted it generally. Another contribution of Arab Cordova, which was truly original, was the system of vaulting based on intersecting arches and visible intersecting ribs.

These and other architectural features developed at Cordova were carried to Toledo and other centres in the north of the peninsula by Mozarabs. Here by merging of Christian and Moslem traditions arose a definite style characterized by almost regular use of the horseshoe arch and the vault. In the hands of Mudejar workmen this mixed art attained great beauty and perfection and became the Spanish national style Mudejar work is still to be seen all over the country. The Spanish language has preserved several architectural terms which attest an Arabic origin.<sup>2</sup>

i See above, p. 4>7- Cf. Bell PP; 5, 9, P>- 7, «g- B C. Leonard

±nce Eng." Uoom "Zamio. Pg. andaimc (Ar. al-di'ama^  
scaffold.ng;

## Music

The corner-stone of Spanish musical art was laid by Ziryáb, a disciple of the Mawsili school of Baghdad. Ziryáb arrived in 822 in Cordova, where his knowledge of more songs than any other artist, his mastery over the physical sciences, his magnetic personality and his refined manner and ready wit made him the social model.<sup>1</sup> It was at Cordova under the patronage of 'Abd-al-Rahmán II that Ziryab, who has also been credited with substituting eagles' talons for wooden plectra, added a fifth string to the lute and opened a school which became the conservatory of Andalusian music. Other schools followed in Seville, Toledo, Valencia and Granada.

After Ziryab, abu-al-Qásim ÍAbbas ibn-Firnás (f 888) is given the largest share of credit for introducing Oriental music into Spain and popularizing it. To his ingenuity is ascribed the discovery of making glass "from stones", as well as the construction in his home of a sort of planetarium where one could see stars, clouds and even lightning. Ibn-Firnas was the first man in Arab history to make a scientific attempt at flight. His flying equipment consisted of a suit of feathers with wings, which, we are told, carried him a long distance in the air. When he alighted, however, he hurt himself because his suit was not provided with a tail.<sup>2</sup> The musical theory and practice introduced by Ziryab and ibn-Firnas were naturally the Perso-Arabic, but gradually this system gave way to the Greek and Pythagorean theories as works from Greek were translated into Arabic.

In general the Western Moslems proved themselves more addicted to the sweet art than their Eastern co-religionists. By the eleventh century the music of Andalusia had almost

paled the fame of Baghdad. At that time Seville under the Abbádids, who for a short period also ruled Cordova, became the centre of the music, song and other gaieties which we usually associate with the Moors in the smiling plains of Andalusia. One of the 'Abbadids, al-Mu\*tamid (1068-91), was not only a gifted poet but also a singer and performer on the lute. The 'Abbadid capital became famous for its manufacture of musical instru-azotea, Pg. agoteia (Ar. al-sutayhaK), flat roof; algibe (Ar. al-jubb, the cistern), ogive. On kadddn see D. Leopoldo de Eguílaz y Yanguas, *Glosario etimológico de las palabras españolas de origen oriental* (Granada, 1886). Cf. R. Dozy and W. H. Engelmann, *Glossaire des mots espagnols et portugais derives de l'arabe*, 2nd ed. (Leyden, 1869); al-kadhdh in ibn-Jubayr, p. 331, l. 18.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 514.

<sup>2</sup> Maqqari, vol. ii, p. 254. merits, in which it developed an export trade. From the Murabit period we have from the pen of the philosopher ibn-Bajjah (ff 1138), who flourished at Seville and Fas, a treatise on music, now lost, which was as much appreciated in the West as al-Fárábi's work in the East. To another philosopher, ibn-Sab'in (t 1269) of the Muwahhid period, we owe a discussion of related musical notes called Kitáb al-Adwár al-Mansüb, of which a solitary copy is preserved in Cairo.<sup>56</sup> In the course of a debate, held in the presence of the third Muwahhid sovereign, al-Mansür (1184-99), between ibn-Rushd and abu-Bakr Muhammad ibn-Zuhr, on the relative excellences of Seville and Cordova, ibn-Rushd, arguing Cordova's case, made this illuminating remark: "I know not what you are talking about, but one thing I do know: When a scholar dies in Seville and his estate wants his books sold, the books are carried to Cordova, where a market is found. But when a musician

dies in Cordova his instruments are carried to Seville for sale.”<sup>57</sup>

As the Christian population accepted the lyric models of the influence Moslems, Arab songs grew popular throughout the peninsula, Moslem musicians flourished at the courts of the kings of Castile and Aragon. Long after the fall of Granada, Moorish dancers and singers continued to entertain the natives of Spain and Portugal.<sup>58</sup> The recent researches of Ribera<sup>59</sup> tend to show that the popular music of Spain (*música ficta*), in fact of all southwestern Europe, in and after the thirteenth century, like the lyric and historical romance of that region, is to be traced to Andalusian and thence through Arabic to Persian, Byzantine and Greek sources. Even as philosophy and mathematics and medicine travelled from Greece and Rome to Byzantium, Persia and Baghdad, then to Spain, and thence to all Europe, so did several phases of musical theory and practice. Many of the instruments shown in the early Spanish miniatures and even some of the performers are of unmistakable Moslem origin.

Some of the early Spanish miniatures show Arab musicians

600 THE ARABS IN EUROPE: SPAIN AND SICILY part iv  
playing a game of chess.<sup>1</sup> Spanish provides the first description of the game in a European language and that in a work of Alfonso X,<sup>2</sup> king of Castile and Leon from 1252-82 and the greatest apostle of Moslem learning in Christian Spain. Alfonso was the man responsible for that great collection of poetry, *Cantigas de Santa Maria*, the music of which, according to Ribera, was of Moslem-Andalusian origin. Besides this collection and the astronomical Alfonsine tables, this monarch compiled a code of laws which bears traces of Islamic influence and which has become the basis of Spanish jurisprudence.

Reference has already been made to Arabic poetical influence in the troubadours, who resembled Arab singers not only in sentiment and character but also in the very forms of their minstrelsy. Certain titles which these Provençal singers gave to their songs are but translations from Arabic titles. Adelard of Bath, who studied music at Paris, was probably the translator of al-Khwarizmi's mathematical treatise as *Liber ysagogartim Alchorismi*, which comprised a section on music. This treatise was, therefore, one of the first to introduce Arab music into the Latin world. In Adelard's days, the first half of the twelfth century, the Arabs were already in possession of several ancient Greek treatises on music as well as some most important original works by al-Kindi, al-Fârâbi, ibn-Sîna and ibn-Bâjjah. Before the end of the century many of these original works had become known in Europe through Latin translations made at Toledo. It is significant that in this same period a new principle appears in Christian European music, the principle that notes have an exact time value or ratio among themselves. The first to give an exposition of this mensural music or measured song was the elusive Franco of Cologne (ca. 1190). His notation, called the Franconian notation, is not essentially different from our own. Under the name *îqa*, rhythm, this same measured music had formed a constituent part of Arab music for at least four centuries prior to Franco's age and was fully described by al-Kindi (fl. ca. 870; above, p. 370).

<sup>1</sup> Sp. *ajedrez* (formerly *axedrez*) Pg. *xadrez*, all derived from Ar. *al-shifranj*, which is borrowed from Skr. through Pers. See above, p. 339. Playing cards were either of Arab origin or transmitted to Europe by Arabs; Sp. *naïpe*, It. *naïb*, for playing card, comes from Ar. *nâ'ib* (governor) represented on a fifteenth-century pack now in Istanbul. L. A. Mayer, *Bulletin de V Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale*, vol. xxxviii (1939) > PP- u3 seg-



<sup>2</sup> For illustration consult John G. White, *El trit ado de ajedrez del Rey d. Alonso el Sabio, del ano 1283* (Leipzig, 1'913), pl. xliii.

After Franco's time there appeared a treatise ascribed to John of Garland dealing with *ochetus*^ i.e. rhythmic mode. The term *ochetus* is probably a transformation of Arabic *iqa* at (pl. of *iqa*).

Mensural music was probably the greatest but certainly not the only contribution the Arabs made in this branch of knowledge. Two of the instruments that have aided most in the progress of the art of music, the lute (Ar. *al-ud*, through Sp. *laud*) and the rebec (Ar. *rabab*,<sup>x</sup> through Sp. *rael*), were introduced into Western Europe by Arabs. The rebec or *ribibe*, a favourite instrument with Chaucer, may be counted as one of the precursors of our violin. *Rabeca* is still the ordinary word used in Portugal for a violin. Other instruments in the peninsula with names derived from Arabic are the old trumpet *anafil* (Fr. *anafil*, from Ar. *al-nafir*\*), the tambourine *pandero* (colloq. Ar. *bandayr*) and the cymbals known as *sonajas* (Ar. pl. *sunuj*, sing. *sinj*, fr. Pers. *sanj*) round whose edge are "jingles". It was also the Moslems who introduced into Europe the guitar (fr. Ar. *qitarah*\* through Sp. *guitarra*, originally Gr.), the horn (Sp. *alboque*, fr. Ar. *al-biiq'*), the timbal (Sp. *atambal*, fr. Ar. *al-tabl*), and the kanoon (fr. Ar. *qanicri*).

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 426.

J Pl. *anfar* (whence perhaps Eng. "fanfare"). This instrument with its name were probably introduced into Europe from Syria during the period of the Crusades, as were the cymbals (*sunuj*)-, Henry G. Farmer, "Oriental Influences on Occidental Military Music," *Islamic Culture*, vol. xv (1941), pp. 235-42. See below, pp. 663-4.

' Masculine form qitar-, see above, p. 427.

## CHAPTER XLII

### IN SICILY

#### Conquest

THE Moslem conquest of Sicily (Ar. Siqilliyah) represents the last ripple in the wave that brought the Arabs into North Africa and Spain. The leaders of the expansion into the island and mid-Europe during the ninth century were Aghlabids from al-Qayrawan; but sporadic attempts by Moslem adventurers, soldiers of fortune and pirates had been made much earlier. In fact, the very same year (652) in which the Byzantine navy at Alexandria was crushed and maritime power began to pass into Arab hands witnessed the first attack on Byzantine Sicily, made by a general of Mu'awiyah.<sup>60</sup> The delights of Syracuse (Saraqusah, Saraqussah), ravaged in this first attempt, consisted of women, church treasures and other valuable booty which invited repeated returns by Moslem plunderers in the course of the second half of the seventh century. In the eighth, Berber and Arab corsairs from North Africa and Moslem Spain began to harass the islands to the north and east and to cast paralysing fear over the inhabitants of Sicily as well as Corsica and Sardinia. Piracy and privateering, be it remembered, were then considered legitimate means of livelihood by Moslems and Christians alike. But there was no planned policy in these early raids.

The establishment of the powerful Aghlabid state of al-Qayrawan in the first year of the ninth century, however, changed the aspect of the situation. An appeal from a Syracusan rebel for aid against the Byzantine governor in 827 offered a timely pretext for an invasion. Ziyadat-Allah I

(817-38), the third Aghlabid, immediately sent off seventy vessels carrying some ten thousand fighters and seven hundred horses under the leadership of his seventy-year-old qadi-vizir, Asad ibn-al-Furat.<sup>61</sup>

The real conquest began. The African army landed at Mazara<sup>1</sup> and advanced to Syracuse. A plague which spread in the Arab camp carried away Asad and a large number of his fighters.<sup>3</sup>

To illustrate Moslem occupation

Reinforced by fresh troops from Spain, the army captured Palermo (Ar. Balarm, originally a Phoenician colony) in 831,

<sup>1</sup> Ar. Mazar; ibn-al-Athir, vol. vi, p. 236; Idrisi, *Min Kitab Nuzhat al-Mushtaq fi Ikhtiràq al-Àfàq*, ed. M. Amari and C. Schiaparelli (Rome, 1878), p. 32; Aman, *Storia*, ed. Nallino, voi. i, pp. 394 seq.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Tdhàri, voi. i, p. 06; ibn-Khaldùn, voi. iv, p. 199.

thereby acquiring a vantage point for further conquest and a seat for the new amirate. About 843 Messina<sup>1</sup> fell. In 878 the strongly fortified Syracuse was taken after nine months' siege and destroyed during the rule of the bloody Aghlabid, Ibrâhîm II (874—902), who towards the close of his reign came in person to Sicily. Here he reduced the district in the neighbourhood of Mount Etna<sup>2</sup> and in 902 destroyed Taormina. Ibrâhîm died and was buried in Sicily. The conquest of the island, which had begun in 827, was now complete. For the next hundred and eighty-nine years Sicily

under turbulent Arab chieftains formed in whole or in part a province of the Arab world.

## In Italy

Just as Spain was a point d'appui for further raids and temporary conquests northward, so was Sicily with regard to Italy. Before his death in 902 Ibrâhîm II had carried the holy war across the straits into the toe of Italy, Calabria,<sup>3</sup> but he was not the first Arab invader to set foot on Italian soil. Shortly after the fall of Palermo, Aghlabid generals had interfered in the quarrels of the rival Lombards of Southern Italy, whose heel and toe were still held by the Byzantine emperor, and when Naples<sup>4</sup> in 837 appealed for Arab aid the Moslem war-cry echoed on the slopes of Vesuvius as it had before on those of its southern sister—"the mountain of fire". About four years later Bari, on the Adriatic, which was to become the main base for the next thirty years, was captured. About the same time the victorious Moslems made an appearance before Venice. In 846 even Rome was threatened by Arab squadrons which landed at Ostia and, unable to penetrate the walls of the Eternal City, sacked the cathedrals of St. Peter beside the Vatican and of St. Paul outside the walls and desecrated the graves of the pontiffs. Three years later another Moslem fleet reached Ostia but was destroyed by the tempestuous sea and the Italian navy. A painting from sketches by Raphael recalls this naval fight and the marvellous rescue of Rome. But the hold of the Moslems over Italy remained so firm that Pope John VIII (872-82) deemed it prudent to pay tribute for two years.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Massîni, Massinah; Yâqût, vol. iv, p. 535; ibn-Jubayr, p. 320.

<sup>2</sup> Ar. jabal al-nar, the mountain of fire; ibn-al-Athîr, vol. vi, p. 239; Yâqût, vol. iii, p. 408; Amari, Biblioteca, app. 2

(Leipzig, 1887), p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Qillawriyah in Yâqût, vol. iv, p. 167; Qallawriyah in ibn-Hawqal, pp. 8, 128; see ibn-Khaldûn, vol. iv, pp. 200, 202.

<sup>4</sup> Kabul; ibn-al-Athir, vol. vii, p. 3; Amari. Biblioteca, index; Idrisi, p. 17.

- Amari, Storia, ed. Nallino, vol. i, pp. 588-93.

The Aghlabids did not limit their operations to the Italian Across coasts. In 869 they captured Malta.<sup>1</sup> From Italy and Spain the Alps piratical raids in the tenth century extended through the Alpine passes into mid-Europe. In the Alps are a number of castles and walls which tourists' guides attribute to the invasion of the Saracens. Certain Swiss place-names, such as Gaby and Algaby (al-jabit, tax collector) which appear in Baedeker's Switzerland, may possibly be of Arabic origin.<sup>2</sup>

The recapture of Bari by the Christians in 871 marks the With-beginning of the end of the Moslem menace to Italy and Central f^j^y Europe. In Bari the commanders had gone so far as to declare themselves "sultans" independent of the amir at Palermo. In 880 the Byzantine Emperor Basil I wrested Taranto (Tarant), another important fortress, from Moslem hands and a few years later expelled the last remnants of the Arabs from Calabria. The final stage of the expansion which had begun in distant Arabia two and a half centuries before was thus brought to an end. At the present day numerous "Saracen towers", structures from which the approach of Arab fleets from Sicily or Africa was announced, still contribute to the scenic beauty of the peerless coastline south of Naples.

In Sicily the amir first held his office under the Aghlabids of The al-Qayrawan.<sup>3</sup> With the destruction of the Aghlabid dynasty in 909 by the new and more powerful Fatimid caliphate, the Sicilian domain became a part of that empire as founded in North Africa by 'Ubaydullah al-Mahdi. Four years later, however, the Sicilian Moslems under Ahmad ibn-Qurhub (912-16) asserted their independence and named the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Muqtadir, foe of the Fatimids, in the Friday prayers.<sup>4</sup> In 917 the Amir Ahmad, abandoned by his Berber troops, suffered execution by order of al-Mahdi and Sicily reverted to the Fatimid domain. With the island as a base the Fatimid fleet carried its plundering raids as far as Genoa, which was sacked in 934 or 935.

The domestic situation in Sicily was far from satisfactory.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, p. 201.

<sup>2</sup> Probably the adjectivemauro occurring in the toponymy is a mere synonym for “brown”, without reference to Moorish invaders. The inhabitants of the Alpine regions may have become acquainted with such words through the Crusades.

<sup>3</sup> For list consult Zambaur, p. 67; Eduard Sachau, *Ein Verzeichnis Muham-medanischer Dynastien* (Berlin, 1923), p. 26.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii, pp. 53-4.

The Spanish and African elements in the Moslem population were in constant friction, which was complicated by the eternal feuds arising from the old distinction among the Arabs between South Arabian Yamanites—including Kalbites—and North Arabians. In 948 the third Fâtimid Caliph al-

Mansûr appointed as governor over Sicily al-Hasan ibn-'Ali ibn-abi-al-Husayn al-Kalbi (f 965), who laid the basis of a more or less independent and stable state.<sup>1</sup> Under him and his successors, the Kalbite dynasty, the seeds of Arab culture were afforded an opportunity to germinate in this polyglot isle. It was during the short reign of abu-al-Futûh Yusuf ibn-'Abdullah (989-98), a descendant of al-Hasan, that Moslem Sicily reached its height.

The Kalbite amirs lived in luxurious palaces and maintained enlightened courts in their flourishing city. The Eastern geographer and traveller ibn-Hawqal<sup>2</sup> (fl. 943“77)> whose description of the capital Palermo is not merely the oldest but the only account by a Moslem eye-witness, found in it over a hundred and fifty butcher shops and the incredible number of three hundred mosques. In the congregational mosques he counted thirty-six rows of worshippers, each with about two hundred men, making over seven thousand in all. He numbered over three hundred public school teachers, who were regarded by the inhabitants as their most pious, excellent and distinguished citizens, and that “in spite of the fact that school teachers are notorious for their mental deficiency and light brains”.

Norman conquest

Arab-Norman culture

The downfall of the Kalbite regime was brought about by civil wars and Byzantine interference, which paved the way for the Norman conquest of the island. This began with the capture of Messina in 1060 by Count Roger, son of Tancred de Haute-ville, culminated in the seizure of Palermo in 1071 and Syracuse in 1085 and ended in 1091. In 1090 Malta was taken by Roger. The Normans, already strong in the

possession of a vigorous state on the mainland, were now secure in their newly conquered territory.

Sicily under the Normans saw the efflorescence of an interesting Christian-Islamic culture. Throughout the Arab period of domination there streamed into the island, already rich in memories of bygone civilizations, Eastern cultural currents which, blending with the precious legacy of Greece and Rome,

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. viii, p. 354.

' Pp. 82-7.

took definite shape under Norman rule and gave the Norman culture its distinctive character. Hitherto the Arabs had been too engrossed in warfare and squabbles to develop the finer arts of peace, but now their genius attained its full fruition in a rich outburst of Arab-Norman art and culture.

Though himself an uncultured Christian, Roger I (f 1101) drew from the Moslems the mass of his infantry, patronized Arab learning, surrounded himself with Eastern philosophers, astrologers and physicians and allowed the non-Christians full liberty to follow their rites. The case of the poet \*Abd-al-Jabbar ibn-Hamdis (ca. 1055-1132), who though born in Syracuse retired at the Norman conquest to the Spanish court of al-Mu\*tamid, was exceptional.<sup>62</sup> On the whole, Roger maintained the former system of administration and even kept high Moslem officials. His court at Palermo seemed more Oriental than Occidental. For over a century after this Sicily presented the unique spectacle of a Christian kingdom in which some of the highest positions were held by Moslems.

In this century the trade of the country remained to a large extent in the hands of Moslem merchants and the cultivation of the land continued to prosper under Arab husbandmen



who, as in Spain, knew how to make the land produce abundantly. Sugar-cane, date-palms, cotton, olives, oranges, mulberries and other plants and fruits were introduced by the Arabs. Sericulture was established by the Normans after 1147. Papyrus, the like of which ibn-Hawqal<sup>63</sup> saw nowhere except in Egypt, was now cultivated in greater abundance than ever before. From its fibre, cordage was made for ships. Ibn-Jubayr,<sup>64</sup> who visited the island in 1184, was greatly impressed by its fertility, rich resources and plentiful means of sustenance. He particularly noted grape-vines and other trees cultivated in symmetrical rows.

The earliest extant paper document from Europe is an order in Greek and Arabic issued by the wife of Roger I, presumably in 1109; but it is more reasonable to suppose that the paper of this document was imported by Sicilian Arabs. From the time of King Roger II we have the earliest coin bearing a date in Arabic numerals (1138) and an Arabic inscription.

The line of Sicilian Arabophiles started by Roger I culminated in his son and second successor Roger II (1130-54) and in

Photo: Anderson

## CAPPELLA PALATINA, PALERMO

Built by Roger II and decorated with medallions bearing Kufic inscriptions

Frederick II. Roger II dressed like a Moslem and his critics called him the "half-heathen king". His robe bore decorative Arabic characters. Even under his grandson William II (1166-

89) ibn-Jubayr<sup>1</sup> saw Christian women of Palermo wearing Moslem costumes. The chapel built by Roger II in his capital had its ceiling covered with Fatimid-influenced paintings and Kufic inscriptions. Arab craftsmen were undoubtedly employed in the construction of this and other Sicilian monuments. Several ivory objects, including caskets and croziers now in the Museo Cristiano of the Vatican and other museums, typify Siculo-Arabic craftsmanship of this period.<sup>2</sup> Roger's fleet, which raised Sicily to the position of the leading maritime power in the Mediterranean, was built and commanded by amirs of whom the greatest was George (Jurji) of Antioch, a Greek formerly in the service of a Moslem prince in al-Mahd<sup>7</sup>yah, Africa. The highest office in the realm was that of ammiratus ammiratorum (amir al-umara}.

The chief ornament of Roger II's court was al-Idrisi, the A-Idrisi most distinguished geographer and cartographer of the Middle Ages. Born in Ceuta in 1100 of Hispano-Arab parents, abu-'Abdullah Muhammad ibn-Muhammad al-Idrisi (f 1166) did his life work at Palermo under the patronage of Roger II. His Rogerian treatise (Kitab Rujar} entitled Nuzhat al-Mushtaq fi Ikhtirdq al-Afdq <sup>3</sup> (the recreation of him who yearns to traverse the lands) not only sums up the main features of such preceding works as those of Ptolemy and al-Mas'udi but is primarily based upon original reports submitted by observers who had been sent to various lands to secure data. In his critical collation of the material al-Idrisi shows a remarkable breadth of view and a grasp of such essential facts as the sphericity of the earth. Besides this monumental work al-Idrisi constructed for his Norman patron a celestial sphere and a disk-shaped map of the world, both in silver.<sup>4</sup>

The second of "the two baptized sultans of Sicily" <sup>5</sup> was Frederick Roger II's grandson Frederick II of Hohenstaufen

(1215-50), <sup>11</sup> who ruled both Sicily and Germany and, besides holding the title of emperor of the Holy Roman Empire after 1220, became king of Jerusalem by his marriage in 1225 with the heiress,

<sup>1</sup> 333-      <sup>2</sup> See Perry B. Cott, *Siculo-Arabic Ivories* (Princeton, 1939).

\* A synopsis of the text with its seventy-one maps was printed in Rome as early

as 1592. It was translated, but inaccurately, into Latin as *Geographia Nubiensts* (Paris, 1619) by two Maronite scholars, Jibra'il al-\$ahyuni (Gabriel Sionita) and Yuhanna al-Hasruni (Joannes Hesronita). Partial editions of the text have been made in Leyden, Madrid, Rome, Bonn, etc. Consult Konrad Miller, *Mappae Arabicae*, vol. vi (Stuttgart, 1927).

...

\* Amari, *Iliblwteca*, p. 658.      <sup>4</sup> Amari, *Stona*, ed. Nallino, vol. 111, p. 37^.

Isabelle of Brienne. The Emperor Frederick therefore was the highest civil authority in Christendom. Three years after his marriage he undertook a Crusade which inoculated him with more Moslem ideas.

In his personal habits and official life Frederick, who kept a harem, was semi-Oriental. In his court flourished philosophers from Syria and Baghdad, with long beards and flowing robes, dancing girls from the Orient and Jews from the East as well as from the West. His interest in the world of Islam he maintained by political and commercial relations, especially with the Ayyubid sultan of Egypt.<sup>1</sup> From this Sultan al-Kamil Muhammad (1218-38), nephew of Salah-al-Din, Frederick received for his menagerie, which included

camels and accompanied him wherever he went in Europe, a giraffe,<sup>2</sup> the first to appear in medieval Europe. From Egypt he also brought experts to test the incubation of ostrich eggs by the heat of the sun. From another Ayyubid sultan, al-Ashraf of Damascus, he received in 1232 a wonderful planetarium with figures of the sun and moon marking the hours on their appointed rounds. In return, the emperor sent a white bear and a white peacock which astonished the Damascenes as much as the marvellous beast from Egypt had astonished their Sicilian contemporaries. It was to this Sultan al-Kamil, among other Moslem rulers, that Frederick propounded, partly for information and partly as a puzzle, those problems of mathematics and philosophy whose solution was successfully undertaken by an Egyptian scholar.<sup>3</sup> The geometrical and astronomical problems, including the squaring of a circle's segment, were solved at al-Mawsil. The same questionnaire was submitted to ibn-SabTn (above, p. 587).

Frederick brought from Syria skilled falconers, watched them train the birds and tried to ascertain by seeling the hawks' eyes whether they could find food by smell. He had his interpreterastrologer Theodore (Thadhuri), a Jacobite Christian from Antioch,<sup>4</sup> translate an Arabic treatise on falconry. This translation together with another from Persian became the basis of Frederick's work on falconry, the first modern natural history. Theodore also extracted for the emperor a treatise on hygiene from the *Sirr al-Asrdr* of the pseudo-Aristotle. As court

<sup>1</sup> Abu-al-Fida', vol. iii, p. 148.      <sup>2</sup> This word is of Arabic origin, *zardfah*.

• Amari, *Bibliotheca*, p. 522; cf. p. 514, l. 4.      <sup>4</sup> Ibn-al-'Ibri, pp. 477-8. astrologer Theodore was preceded by

Michael Scot, who from 1220 to 1236 represented in Sicily and Italy the learning of Moslem Spain. Scot made for the emperor from Arabic a Latin summary of Aristotle's biological and zoological works, par-

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Reproduced by permission of the Bodleian Library, Oxford

## AN ARABIC MAP OF THE WORLD

Based on al-Idrisi

ticularly *De animalibus*, with ibn-Sina's commentary, which he dedicated to his patron as *Abbreviatio Avicenne*.

This almost modern spirit of investigation, experimentation and research which characterized the court of Frederick marks the beginning of the Italian Renaissance. Italian poetry, letters and music began to blossom under Provençal and Arabic influence.<sup>1</sup> The cultivation of poetry in the vulgar tongue was evidently due to the example of Arabic poets and singers, and the metrics of the early popular poetry of Italy, as represented by the carnival songs and the ballata, is fundamentally the same as that of the folk poetry of Andalusia.<sup>2</sup> "Stanza" is evidently a translation of Arabic bayt, "house", "strophe". But Frederick's greatest single contribution was the founding of the University of Naples (1224), the first in Europe to be established by a definite charter. In it he deposited a large collection of Arabic manuscripts. The works of Aristotle and ibn-Rushd which he caused to be translated were used in its curriculum; copies of the translations were sent to the

Universities of Paris and Bologna. The University of Naples counted among its pupils Thomas Aquinas. In the fourteenth and following centuries Arabic studies were cultivated in several European universities, including Oxford and Paris, but with an entirely different motive: that of preparing Christian missionaries for Moslem lands.

### Sicily's place in transmitting thought

The meeting-point of two cultural areas, Sicily was peculiarly adapted to act as a medium for transmitting ancient and medieval lore. Its population comprised a Greek element which used Greek, a Moslem element which spoke Arabic and a body of scholars who knew Latin. All three languages were in current use in the official registers and royal charters as well as among the populace of the many-tongued Palermo. It was in Sicily about 1160 that the first translation of the *Almagest* into Latin was done directly from Greek with the collaboration of a Greek-speaking Sicilian, Eugene of Palermo, surnamed the Amir. Eugene, who flourished under Roger II and his successor William I, knew Arabic as well as Latin. He made a Latin version from Arabic of the *Optica* ascribed to Ptolemy, the Greek text of which is lost, and helped translate into Greek the Arabic *Kalilah*. Under William not only translations from Arabic but also from the Greek originals were encouraged.

The Jews of Sicily, like those of Spain, had a significant part in the work of translation. The encyclopædic medical work of al-Razi was done into Latin by the Sicilian Jewish physician,

<sup>1</sup> Amari, *Storia*, ed. Nallino, vol. iii, pp. 760 seq.} G. A. Cesareo, *Le origini dell'epoesia lirica e l'epoesia siciliana sotto gli svevi*, 2nd ed. (Milan, 1924), pp. 101, 107.

' José M. Millas in *Revista de archives*, vol. xli (1920), pp. 550\*64» xlii (1921), PP- 37\*59,

Faraj ben-Salim, in 1279 under the auspices of Charles I of Anjou and was propagated in numerous manuscripts during the succeeding centuries. This was the only major medical work rendered into Latin in Sicily, where the translations dealt mainly with astronomy and mathematics. Though some of the Greek and Arabic bopks were done again and better in Toledo, nevertheless Sicily's contribution was of prime value.

Since the Norman kings and their successors on the Sicilian via Italy throne held not only the island but also Southern Italy, they provided a bridge for the transmission of various elements of Moslem culture into the peninsula and mid-Europe. By the middle of the tenth century traces of Arab learning became clearly noticeable north of the Alps. Dante's ideas of the other world may not have been derived from any particular Arabic text, but they certainly appear to have been of Oriental origin, though drawn by him from the popular lore of Europe. This penetration from the East through various channels is evident in-the domain of art as well as in science and literature. The design of Renaissance campanili., it would seem, was derived from the square North African, more particularly Egyptian, type of minaret. Long after Sicily and the southern part of the peninsula had reverted to Christian rule Moslem craftsmen and artists continued to flourish, as evidenced by the mosaics and inscriptions of the Palatine Chapel. The renowned weaving-house established by the Moslem rulers in the royal palace at Palermo supplied European royalty with state robes which bore Arabic inscriptions. The first Italian textile workers acquired their technical knowledge and models for designs from Sicily. By the beginning of the thirteenth century silk weaving had already become the principal

industry in several Italian towns, which exported fabrics imitating the Sicilian stuffs into various parts of Europe. As in Palermo and Cadiz, so in Venice, Ferrara and Pisa, colonies of Oriental craftsmen taught the natives, and collaborated with them. So great was the demand for Oriental fabrics that there was a time when no European could have felt really well-dressed unless he possessed at least one such garment.

During the fifteenth century when opulent Venice was so actively adopting and scattering Moslem fashions in art, books bound in Italian workshops began to assume an Oriental appearance. The peculiarities of Arabic binding, including the flap that

[1](#)

Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 480; Maqqari, vol.- i, p. 546.

[2](#)

\* Ed. Francisco Codera, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1890-92).

[3](#)

Ed. Codera, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1882-3).

[4](#)

Al-Dhahabi, Tadhkirat al-Huffá^, 2nd ed., vol. iv (Haydarábád, 1334), p. 129. Cf. ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, pp. 305-6.

[5](#)

One part edited by Codera, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1886-9), another by M. Alarcon and C. A. Gonzalez Palencia in Miscelánea de estudios y textos árabes (Madrid,



[6](#)

1915), pp. 146-690, completed by Alfred Bel and M. Ben Cheneb (Algiers, 1919-20). On ibn-al-Abbar consult Kutubi, vol. ii, pp. 282-4; ibn-Khaldün, tr. de Slane, vol. ii, pp. 347-50; ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, p. 77.

[7](#)

\* Edited in part by Dozy (Leyden, 1847-51).

[8](#)

' Ed. Codera and Julián Ribera (Madrid, 1884-5).

[9](#)

Al-Maqqari devotes the second half of his *Nafh al-Tib* to the life and works of ibn-al-Khatib. Al-Maqqari was of Tilimsan but compiled this work, which is our principal authority for the whole literary history of Moslem Spain, at Damascus between 1628 and 1630.

[10](#)

See above, p. 560.

[11](#)

<sup>8</sup> *Al-Ihatah Ji Akhbar Gharnatah*, 2 vols. (Cairo, 1319), an abbreviated edition.

[12](#)

Now called Tawghzut, east of Tilimsan in northern Algeria.

[13](#)

7 vols. (Cairo, 1284). At the end of vol. vii, beginning p. 379, is his auto

biography a major source for his life. This was translated by M. G. de Slane, *Journal asiatique*, ser. 4> vol. 3 (1844), PP-5'6o, 187-210, 291-308, 325-53. See Maqqari (Cairo, 1302), vol. iv, pp. 6-17.

[14](#)

Earlier than the Cairo edition is that of M. Quatremere, 3 vols. (Pans, 1858):

tr. de Slane, 3 vols. (Paris, 1862-8, ed. Boutboul, Paris, 1934-8).

[15](#)

Tr. de Slane, *Histoire des Berberes et des dynasties musulmanes de l'Afrtque septcntrionale*, ed. Paul Casanova, 2 vols. (Paris, 1925-7)

[16](#)

Tr. Franz Rosenthal, *Ibn-Khaldun's Muqaddimah*, 3 vols. (New York, 1958).

[17](#)

<sup>6</sup> *Muqaddamah*, pp. 4-5.

[18](#)

Consult *ibn-Bashkuwal*, vol. i, p. 282; *Suyuti*, *Bughyah*, p. 285.

[19](#)

Edited in part by de Slane (Algiers, 1857).

[20](#)

\* On him see Maqqari (Leyden), vol. i, pp. 7\*4<sup>se(b</sup>

[21](#)

Ed. William Wright, 2nd ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leyden, 19°7)\*

[22](#)

<sup>6</sup> “Tuhfat al-Albab”, ed. Gabriel Ferrand in Journal asiatique, vol. ccvii (1925), p. 238.

[23](#)

Not cognate with “cipher” meaning from Ar. sifr, book, originally Aramaic.

[24](#)

<sup>1</sup> Khwarizmi, Mafalih, p. 194.

[25](#)

David E. Smith and Louis C. Karpinski, The Hindu-Arabic Numerals (Boston and London, 1911), pp. 65 seq.-, Solomon Gandz in Isis, vol. xvi (1931), pp. 393-424. See ibn-Khaldun, Muqaddamah, p. 4, 1. 22.

[26](#)

On the horse and horsemen sec ibn-Hudhayl, Hilyat al-Fursan wa-Shi<sup>25</sup>ar al-

[27](#)

Shuj'an, ed. Louis Mercier (Paris, 1922); tr. Mercier, *La parure des cavaliers et l'insigne des preux* (Paris, 1924).

[28](#)

' See below, p. 587.  
Cordova.

[28](#) Ghafiq was a town near

[29](#)

Ibn-abi-Uṣaybi'ah, vol. ii, p. 52. An abridged edition prepared by the famous Christian historian ibn-al-'Ibri has been recently published as *Muntakhab Kitab Jami' al-Mufradat*, ed. Max Meyerhof and Jurji ṣubhi (Cairo, 1932?), with an English translation. Ibn-al-'Ibri's abridged translation into Syriac has been lost.

[30](#)

<sup>8</sup> Muqaddamah, p. 412.

[31](#)

<sup>8</sup> In his *Bibliotheca Arabico-Hispana Escorialensis*, vol. i (Madrid, 1760), pp.

323 seq., the Lebanese scholar Michael Casiri (Ghaziri) was the first to call attention to the complete MS. of ibn-al-'Awwam's work in the Escorial. Casiri's pupil Josef Antonio Banqueri edited it with a Sp. tr., 2 vols. (Madrid, 1802); tr. Clement-Mullet, *Le livre d'agriculture*, 2 vols. in 3 pts. (Paris, 1864-7). Neither the edition nor the translations are satisfactory.

[32](#)

\* Ibn-abi-Uṣaybi'ah, vol. ii, p. 133; Maqqari, vol. i, p. 934; Kutubi, vol. i, p. «61. Ibn-abi-Uṣaybi'ah was a pupil of ibn-al-Baytar and herborized with him in the neighbourhood of Damascus.

### [33](#)

Al-Jâmi' li-Mufradat al-Adiviyah w-al-Aghdhiyah, 4 vols. (Bûlâq, 1291); German translation by Joseph v. Sontheimer, 2 vols. (Stuttgart, 1840-42) unsatisfactory; Fr. tr. Lucien Leclerc in Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale, vol. xxiii (Paris, 1877), pt. i, vol. xxv (1881), pt. i, vol. xxvi (1883), pt. i.

### [34](#)

“Muqni’at al-Sâ’il \*an al-Marad al-Hâ’il”, ed. and tr. M. J. Muller, Sitzungsberichte der kônigl. bayer. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu München, vol. ii (Munich, 1863), pp. 6-7, 18-19.

### [35](#)

- His birthplace al-Zahrâ’ was the famous suburb of Cordova. He is known to the Latin writers as Abulcasis or Albucasis, a corruption of abu-al-Qasim.

### [36](#)

Talifya. ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. ii, p. 52.

### [37](#)

<sup>1</sup> The Oxford edition Albucasis, De chirurgia, has part of the text with Latin translation by John Channing. The text in its entirety has not yet been published.

[38](#)

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-abi-Uṣaybi'ah, vol. ii, p. 47, where Romanus is credited with the donation.

[39](#)

See ibn-abi-Uṣaybi'ah, vol. ii, pp. 66-7.

\* The Hebrew translation was rendered into “vulgar language”, possibly the Venetian dialect, which was in turn done into Latin in 1280 with the help of a Jew in Venice, where it was repeatedly printed.

- Ibn-abi-Uṣaybi'ah, vol. ii, pp. 75-6.

[40](#)

Sulaymán ibn-Yahya ibn-Jabirül. Cf. ṣa'id, p. 89.

[41](#)

\* See Miguel Asín, *Abenmasarra y su escuela. Orígenes de la filosofía hispano musulmana* (Madrid, 1914).

[42](#)

His *Islâh al-Akhlâq* has been edited and translated by Stephen S. Wise (New

[43](#)

York, 1901).

[44](#)

Ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. ii, p. 63, makes ibn-Rushd (b. 1126) ibn-Bâjjah's pupil.

[45](#)

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-Khallikân, vol. ii, p. 372. [45](#) Whence his Latinized name Abubacer.

[46](#)

<sup>6</sup> Ibn-al-Tufayl in ibn-abi-Uṣaybi'ah, vol. ii, p. 78. Cf. ibn-abi-Zar', vol. i, p. 135; ibn-Khaliikan, vol. iii, p. 467.

[47](#)

See Charles H. Haskins, *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1927), ch. i.

[48](#)

Sp. alhaja, jewel, is from Ar. al-hdjah.

[49](#)

\* Generally known as damascening, from

[50](#)

Damascus.

[51](#)

Ar. al-zulayji. See Maqqari, vol. i, p. 124.

[52](#)

\* Idrisi, *Sifat al-Maghrib* (Leyden), p. 189.

[53](#)

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-Hawqal, p. 79; Iṣṭakhri, p. 44, l. 8; ibn-al-Khatib, Lamhah, p. 13; Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 123-4.

[54](#)

Maqqari, vol. i, p. 102.

[55](#)

See below, p. 668.

[54](#) See above, pp. 422-3; below,

p. 668.

[56](#)

Ahmad Taymūr in al-Hidāl, vol. xxviii (1919), p. 214\*

[57](#)

Maqqari, vol. i, pp. 98, 302.

[58](#)

<sup>8</sup> The Morris dance of England, as the name indicates, is of Moorish origin.

[59](#)

Historia de la música árabe medieval y su influencia en la española (Madrid, 1927); Music in Ancient Arabia and Spain; Being la música de las cantigas, tr. and abr. Eleanor Hague and Marion Leffingwell (Stanford University, 1929), esp. ch. xii; Disertaciones, vol. ii, pp. 3\*[56](#)74\*

[60](#)



See above, p. 167; Theophanes, p. 348.

[61](#)

• Ibn Idhari, vol. i, p. 95; Nuwayri, ed. Gaspar, vol. ii, p. 241; Amari, Biblioteca, P- 5[61](#)7.

[62](#)

Ibn-Hamdis later accompanied his Sevillian patron into captivity in Africa.

[63](#)

His Diwan was edited by C. Schiaparelli (Rome, 1897); extracts in Amari, Btbliblioteca,

[64](#)

pp. 547\*73- ' P- 86. ' 3^

614 THE ARABS IN EUROPE: SPAIN AND SICILY part iv folds over to protect the front edges of the volume, appear on Christian books. At the same time new methods of tooling and decorating leather covers were also being learned from Oriental artisans in various Italian towns. Venice, moreover, was the home of another industry, the inlaying of brass with gold,<sup>1</sup> silver or red copper, an art which flourished mainly in al-Mawsil in the twelfth century.

On the whole, Sicily as a transmitter of Moslem culture might claim for itself a place next in importance to that of Spain and higher than that of Syria in the period of the Crusades.

× It. azzimina, from Ar. ajami, Persian, foreign.





From a photograph by Österreichische Lichtbildstelle,  
Vienna THE CORONATION MANTLE OF ROGER II, WITH KUFIC  
INSCRIPTION ON THE SEMICIRCULAR BORDER

Now in the Weltliche Schatzkammer, Vienna

[To face page 614

PART V

THE LAST OF THE MEDIEVAL

MOSLEM STATES

A SHI'ITE CALIPHATE IN EGYPT: THE FATIMIDS

The Fatimid caliphate, the only major Shi'ite one in Islam,<sup>[1](#)</sup>  
isma'ilite established itself in Tunisia in 909 as a deliberate  
challenge to <sup>a</sup>' the religious headship of the Islamic world

represented by the 'Abbasids of Baghdad. The founder was Sa'id ibn-Husayn, probably a descendant of the second founder of the Isma'ilite sect,<sup>2</sup> the Persian 'Abdullah ibn-Maymun. The spectacular rise of ibn-Maymun's successor Sa'id was the culmination of deeply, skilfully organized Isma'ilite propaganda paralleled only by the earlier movement which led to the break-up of the Umayyad caliphate. No small measure of this success was due to the personal efforts of the chief dai (propagandist), abu-'Abdullah al-Husayn al-Shi'i, a native of San'a' in al-Yaman, who toward the close of the ninth century proclaimed himself precursor of the Mahdi and sowed seeds of sedition among the Berbers of North Africa, especially the Kitamah (Kutamah) tribe. His acquaintance with members of this tribe was made in the season of the pilgrimage at Makkah.<sup>3</sup> Ifriqiyah was then under Aghlabid rule.

Al-Shi'i's conspicuous success in this distant region gave The Sa'id the signal to leave his Isma'ilite headquarters at Salamyah and make his way disguised as a merchant into north-western Africa. Thrown into a dungeon in Sijilmasah by order of the Aghlabid Ziyadat-Allah (903-9), Sa'id was rescued by al-Shi'i,<sup>4</sup> who in 909 destroyed the century-old Aghlabid dynasty and drove its last scion Ziyadat-Allah out of the country. The Agh-labids were the last stronghold of Sunnite Islam in that part of

Africa. Sa'id was proclaimed ruler under the title of the Imam<sup>1</sup> 'Ubaydullah al-Mahdi and accepted as a descendant of Fatimah through al-Husayn and Isma'il. The dynasty he established is often referred to as al-'Ubaydiyyah, especially by those who do not believe in his alleged descent.

Moslem historians are divided into two camps on the question of the legitimacy of his Fatimid origin. At least eight varying pedigrees were provided for him by his

supporters and enemies, some of the latter going so far as to charge that he was the son of a Jew. Notable among the supporters of his legitimacy are ibn-al-Athir,<sup>2</sup> ibn-Khaldun<sup>3</sup> and al-Maqrizi.\* Among those who suspect or deny the genealogy and regard Sa'id as an impostor are ibn-Khallikan,<sup>5</sup> ibn-Tdhari,<sup>6</sup> al-Suyuti<sup>7</sup> and ibn-Taghri-Birdi.<sup>8</sup> It is noteworthy, however, that no dispute as to the genuineness of the Fatimid descent arose until the year 1011, when the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Qadir issued in Baghdad a curious manifesto, signed by several Sunni and Shi'ite notables, declaring that his Egyptian rival al-Hakim was descended not from Fatimah but from Daysan the heretic.<sup>9</sup>

### The first Fatimid

'Ubaydullah (909-34) established himself first in the Aghlabid residence Raqqadah, a suburb of al-Qayrawan. He proved himself a most capable ruler. Two years after assuming supreme authority he killed his missionary-commander al-Shi'i and soon afterward extended his rule over the whole African territory from the Morocco of the Idrisids to the confines of Egypt. In 914 he seized Alexandria; two years later he devastated the Delta. To Sicily he sent a new governor from the Kitamah tribe and with the rebel ibn-Hafsun in Spain he established friendly relations. Malta, Sardinia,<sup>10</sup> Corsica, the Balearic and other islands felt the power of the fleet which he had inherited from the Aghlabids. About 920 he took up his residence in the new capital al-Mahdiah,<sup>11</sup> which he founded on the Tunisian coast sixteen miles south-east of al-Qayrawan and named after himself.

<sup>1</sup> As Shi'ites, the Fatimids preferred the title imam to caliph.

<sup>8</sup> Vol. viii, pp. 17-20, abridged by abu-al-Fida', vol. ii, pp. 67-8.

\* Vol. iv, p. 31.  
pp. 348-9.

<sup>4</sup> Khitat (Bulaq, 1270), vol. i,

\* Vol. i, p. 487.

<sup>6</sup> Vol. i, pp. 150, 157-8.

<sup>7</sup> Tarikh al-Khulafa' (Cairo, 1305), p. 214. <sup>8</sup> Ed. Popper, vol. ii, pt. 2, p. 112.

<sup>9</sup> Text of manifesto preserved in abu-al-Fida', vol. ii, p. 150.

<sup>10</sup> Finally subjugated in 1003 from Spain.

<sup>11</sup> Yaqut, Buldan, vol. iv, pp. 694-6; Mas'udi, Tanbih, p. 334; ibn-Hammad, Akhbar Muluk bani-'Ubaid, ed. M. Vonderheyden (Algiers, 1927), pp. 9-10.

'Ubaydullah's successors pursued his policy of aggression and The fleet expansion. His son<sup>1</sup> abu-al-Qasim Muhammad al-Qa'im (934-946) sent a fleet which in 934 or 935 harried the southern coast of France, took Genoa and coasted along Calabria, carrying off slaves and other booty. All these expeditions, however, led to no permanent conquest. Under al-Qa'im's grandson abu-Tamim Ma'add al-Mu'izz (952-75) the fleet raided the coasts of Spain, whose caliph was none other than the mighty al-Nasir. Three years later (958) the Fatimid army advanced westward as far as the Atlantic, whence the commander sent to his caliph live fish in jars. In 969 Egypt was wrested from its Ikhshidid rulers. Its fleet was strengthened by new units built at Maqas, the predecessor of Bulaq as the port of Cairo.

The hero of these last exploits was Jawhar al-Siqilli (the Sicilian), also called al-Rumi (the Greek), originally a Christian jawhar born in Byzantine territory, probably Sicily, whence he was brought as a slave to al-Qayrawan.<sup>2</sup> Immediately after his victorious entry into the capital al-Fustat in 969, Jawhar began to lay out a new quarter which he named al-Qahirah.<sup>3</sup> This city, modern Cairo, became the capital of the Fatimids in 973. After founding the new capital, today the most populous city of Africa, Jawhar in 972 built the great mosque al-Azhar, which was soon afterward made an academy by the Caliph al-Aziz.

Jawhar thus became the second founder, after al-Shi'i, of the Fatimid empire, which now included all North Africa. Western Arabia was inherited from the Ikhshidids, who had been entrusted by the 'Abbasids with the guardianship of the Holy City. As soon as Jawhar was established on Egyptian soil he dispatched to neighbouring Syria a lieutenant who in 969 reached and temporarily occupied Damascus.<sup>5</sup> His principal opponents were the Qarmatians, who were at this time all-powerful in many sections of Syria.

During the peaceful reign of abu-Mansur Nizar al-Aziz (Fatimid Caliph) the fifth of the dynasty and the first to commence his reign, its height

1 His ward, an Ismailid, according to an Ismailite source; Bernard Lewis, *The Origins of Ismailism*. (Cambridge, 1949) pp. 51-2.

2 Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, pp. 209-13; Maqrizi, vol. i, pp. 35-2, 377.

3 "The triumphant", so called after the planet Qahir al-Falak (the triumphant of heaven Mars), which was in the

ascendant; corrupted by\_Venetians into Cairo.

<sup>4</sup> “The bright (or fair) one”, after al-Zahra’, a title of Fatimah

‘ Ibn-Khaldun, vol. iv, p. 48; Maqrizi, vol. i, p. 378.

reign in Egypt, the Fatimid empire reached its zenith. The name of this caliph was cited in the Friday prayers from the Atlantic to the Red Sea and in al-Yaman, Makkah, Damascus, and once even in al-Mawsil. At least nominally his rule covered that vast area. Under him the Egyptian caliphate not only became the most formidable rival of that of Baghdad but even eclipsed it and appropriated for itself the position of the only great Moslem state in the eastern Mediterranean. Al-'Aziz went so far as to erect a two-million-dinar palace in Cairo to house his 'Abbasid rivals, whom he hoped to seize after the capture of Baghdad. Like his predecessors he cast covetous eyes on distant Spain, but the proud Cordovan caliph on receiving a sharp note from the Fatimid sovereign is said to have sent back the following retort: “Thou ridiculest us because thou hast heard of us. If we had ever heard of thee, we would reply.”<sup>1</sup>

Of the Fatimid caliphs al-'Aziz was probably the wisest and most beneficent. He lived in luxury, built in Cairo and its environs several new mosques, palaces, bridges and canals and extended to the Christians under him a measure of toleration never enjoyed before. In this attitude he was undoubtedly influenced by his Christian vizir 'Isa ibn-Nastur and his Russian wife, the mother of his son and heir al-Hakim and sister of the two Melkite patriarchs of Alexandria and of Jerusalem.

The decline of the Fatimid power began soon after the beneficent reign of al-'Aziz, the first of his house to adopt,



following the 'Abbasid precedent, the fateful policy of importing Turkish as well as negro mercenary troops. The insubordination and constant quarrelling of these troops among themselves and with the Berber bodyguard became one of the chief causes of the final collapse of the kingdom. It was Circassian and Turkish soldiers and slaves who later usurped the supreme authority and established independent dynasties.

### A deranged caliph

Al-'Aziz' successor, abu-'Ali Mansur al-Hakim (996-1021), was only eleven when he came to the throne. His reign was marked with monstrous atrocities. He killed several of his vizirs, demolished a number of Christian churches including that of the Holy Sepulchre (1009), forced Christians and Jews to wear black robes, ride only on donkeys and display when in baths a cross dangling from their necks, if Christians, and a sort of

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Taghri-Birdi, ed. Popper, vol. ii, pt. 2, p. 2.

yoke with bells, if Jews.<sup>5</sup> Al-Hakim was the third caliph in Islam, after al-Mutawakkil and 'Umar II, to impose such stringent measures on non-Moslems.<sup>6</sup> Otherwise the Fâtimid regime was remarkably favourable for dhimmis. The edict for the destruction of the Holy Sepulchre was signed by his Christian secretary ibn-'Abdun and the act was one of the contributory causes of the Crusades. Finally this enigmatic, blue-eyed caliph, following the extreme development of Ismâ'îlite doctrine, declared himself the incarnation of the Deity and was so accepted by a newly organized sect, called Druzes, after its first great missionary, a Turk named al-Darazi (j\* ioiç).<sup>7</sup> On February 13, 1021, al-Hâkim was killed on the Muqattam, probably through a conspiracy headed by

his sister Sitt al-Muluk, whom the caliph had charged with unchastity. .

After al-Hakim immature youths were made caliphs with the Decadence real power in the hands of vizirs, who later even assumed the royal title malik. Al-Hâkim's son and successor al-Zâhir (1021-1035) <sup>was</sup> sixteen when he came to the throne. It was this caliph who received permission from Constantine VIII to have his name mentioned in the mosques of the emperor's domain and to have the mosque at Constantinople restored in return for the caliph's permission to have the Church of the Holy Sepulchre rebuilt.<sup>8</sup> Al-Zâhir's successor was his eleven-year-old son, Ma'add al-Mustansir (1035-94), whose reign of almost sixty years is the longest in Moslem annals.<sup>9</sup> In the early part of his reign his mother, a Sudanese slave once purchased from a Jew, enjoyed with her vendor most of the power. By this time the Fâtimid dominions had shrunk to little more than Egypt itself. After 1043 the Fâtimid possession in Syria, always loosely bound to Egypt, began rapidly to disintegrate. Palestine was often in open revolt. A mighty power advancing from the east, that of the Saljûq Turkomans, was now overshadowing Western Asia. In the meantime the Fâtimid African provinces were severing their tributary connection and passing into open independence or reverting to their old allegiance to the 'Abbâsids. The troublesome Arab

tribes of the banu-Hilâl and Sulaym, originally of Najd and now of Upper Egypt, were instigated in 1052 to move westward where for years they ravaged Tripoli and Tunisia.<sup>10</sup> Sicily, which for a time acknowledged after the Aghlabid the Fâtimid sovereignty, was by 1071 mostly subdued by the Normans, who subsequently even overran parts of the African mainland. Arabia alone kept in part faithful to the Shi'ite cause. On the dark horizon the only ray of light was

the temporary success at Baghdad of the Turkish general and usurper al-Basâsîri [11](#) (f 1060), through whose domination the Egyptian caliph's name was cited in the Baghdad mosques for forty successive Fridays. Wâsit and al-Basrah followed the example of Baghdad. The turban of the 'Abbâsid Caliph al-Qâ'im, who even renounced all his rights to the caliphate in favour of his Fâtimid rival, the Prophet's mantle and a beautiful window from his palace were brought to Cairo as trophies. The turban and mantle together with the document of renunciation were returned to Baghdad about a century later by Salâh-al-Dîn, but the window was used in one palace after another until the Mamlûk Sultan Baybars al-Jâshnakîr added it to the tomb in which he was buried in 1309.

## Fall

At home trouble was continually brewing between Turkish, Berber and Sudanese battalions, and state authority was paralysed. Seven years' famine exhausted the economic resources of the country. In 1073 the vacillating caliph summoned the Armenian Badr al-Jamâli, a former slave, from his military governorship of 'Akka to act as vizir and commander in chief.[12](#) The new Amir al-Juyûsh took command with such vigour that he brought order out of apparent chaos and gave the Fâtimid régime a new lease of life. But the revival was of short duration. Neither Badr's efforts nor those of his son and successor, al-Malik al-Afdal,[13](#) who wielded the supreme authority after his father's death in 1094, could check the tide of decline. The remaining years of Fâtimid rule[14](#) were marked by continuous struggle between vizirs backed by factions in the army. On the death of al-Mustansir, al-Malik al-Afdal placed on the throne the caliph's youngest son under the name al-Musta'li with the expectation of holding him under his influence. After al-Musta'li, his son, a child of five years, was

declared caliph by al-Afdal, who gave him the honorific title al-Amir (1101-30). When al-Hafiz (1130-1149) died his power hardly extended beyond the caliphal palace. His son and successor al-Zafir (1149-54) was then a gay youth and the power was usurped by the Kurdish vizir ibn-al-Sallar, styled al-Malik al-'Adil. The memoirs of Usamah,<sup>1</sup> who spent the years between 1144 and 1154 in the Fatimid court,

Table of Fatimid caliphs :

1. Al-Mahdi (909-34)

2. Al-Qa'im (934-46)

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3. Al-Man'ur (946-52)

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4. Al-Mu'izz (952-75)

5. Al-'Aziz (975-96)

6. Al-Hakim (996-1021)

'I .

7. Al-Zahir (1021-35)

8. Al-Mustanşir (1035-94)

|

1

For earlier independent 'Alid principalities review the Idrisids and Ham-mudids. The Sharifs of Morocco, whose assumption of sovereignty dates from 1544, trace their

lineage through al-Hasan to 'Ali and Fapmah, but are almost orthodox.

[2](#)

<sup>1</sup> The original founder was the Imam Isma'il (f 76°); above, p. 442.

[3](#)

Ibn-'Idhari, vol. i, p. 118.

[4](#)

\* Some wrongly suspect that the real prisoner was slam before the surrender of Sijilmasah to al-Shfi.

[5](#)

Ibn-Khallikân, vol. iii, p. 5; ibn-Hammâd, p. 54; cf. Yahya ibn-Sa'id, ed. Cheikho et a/., p. 187.

[6](#)

<sup>1</sup> For the Shâfi'ite restrictions see Ibshihi, Mustatrafol. i. p. 100.

[7](#)

\* For more on this sect consult Hitti, Origins of Druze People.

[8](#)

Niaqrizi, vol. i, p. 355\* Cf. Yahya ibn-Sa id, pp. 270-71; above, p. 204.

[9](#)

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Khallikân, vol. ii, p. 550; see above, p. 481, n. 2.

[10](#)

The migratory movements and military exploits of banu-Hilâl provide the historical background of the celebrated epic *Sīrat bani-Hilal*.

[11](#)

Ibn-Khallikân, vol. i, pp. 107-8.

[12](#)

\* Ibid. vol. iv, p. 64; ibn-al-Athir, vol. x, pp. 60, 160.

[13](#)

Abu-al-Qâsim Shâhinshâh; ibn-Khallikân, vol. i, pp. 396-7.

[14](#)

<sup>1</sup> For list of Fâtimid caliphs see genealogical tree on following page.

I

9. Al-Musta'li (1094-1101) (Muhammad)

I

I

10. Al-Amir (1101-30) II. Al-Hafi? (1130-49)  
(Yusuf)

12. Al-Zafir (1149-54)

14. Al-'Adid (1160-71)

13. Al-Fa'iz (1154-60)

show that in no court were intrigues, feuds and jealousies more rife. The assassination of ibn-al-Sallar (1153) <sup>b</sup>y his wife's grandson Nasr ibn-'Abbas, who was later encouraged by the caliph to make an attempt on the life of his father, 'Abbas, ibn-al-Sallar's successor in the vizirate, and finally the secret murder of al-Zafir himself by the young conspirator, form one of the darkest chapters in the history of Egypt. The second day after the caliph had vanished 'Abbas declared the four-year-old son of al-Zafir. al-Fa iz, caliph (1154-60). The boy caliph died aged eleven and was succeeded by his nine-year-old cousin al-'Adid,

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Hitti, pp. 6-33 ħrab-Synan Gentleman, pp. 3°\*59\*

624 LAST OF THE MEDIEVAL MOSLEM STATES part v the fourteenth and last in a line which had lasted for over two and a half centuries. The precarious existence of the people, depending as they did for their sustenance on the

overflow of the Nile, was in the meantime being rendered more miserable by repeated famines and plagues. The result was heavier taxes and more general extortion to supply the insatiable greed of the caliphs and their soldiery. Matters were complicated by the advent of the Crusaders and the repeated attacks of Amalric, king of Jerusalem, who in 1167 stood at the very gates of Cairo. These conditions were brought to an end by Salah-a/-Dīn, who in 1171 dethroned the last Fatimid caliph.

## LIFE IN FĀTIMID EGYPT

EGYPT was the only land of the once far-flung Fâtimid domain where the successors of 'Ubaydullâh al-Mahdi impressed the stamp of their cultural characteristics. The precarious relationship that held the several provinces of north-western Africa and Western Asia to Cairo militated against the possibility of leaving in those regions peculiarly Fâtimid traces. In the cultural history of Egypt the Fâtimid together with the preceding Ikhshidid and Tûlûnid periods may be described as the Arabo-Persian era as distinct from the Perso-Turkish, which covered the Ayyûbid and Mamluk periods. The pre-Tûlûnid period may be described as purely Arabic. The Ayyûbid dynasty, which supplanted the Fâtimid, introduced to Africa the spirit and culture of the great Saljûq empire, noticeable in its art and industry and its political and intellectual movements. Under the Fâtimids, however, it is the influence of Persian culture that is paramount. But the backbone of the populace throughout medieval and modern history was composed of Arabicized Copts. This populace remained under the ultra-Shî'ite regime Sunnite at core, as can be inferred from the facility with which Salâh-al-Dīn restored official orthodoxy.

Politically the Fâtimid period marks a new epoch in the history of the land, which for the first time since Pharaonic



days had a completely sovereign power full of vitality and founded on a religious basis. The two preceding dynasties had neither national nor religious footing in the country. Their rise and existence they owed to the military ability of their soldier-founders and to the dilapidated condition of the 'Abbâsid state.

Though the golden age in the history of Fâtimid Egypt began High life with al-Mu'izz and culminated with al-'Aziz, yet Egypt in the time of al-Mustansir was still the leading country of Islam. The Persian Ismâ'îli missionary Nâsir-i-Khusraw,<sup>1</sup> who visited the

<sup>1</sup> Scfer Namch, ed. Scheier, pp. 36-56, tr. pp. 110-62.

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626 LAST OF THE MEDIEVAL MOSLEM STATES part V country in 1046-49, shortly before the economic and political crash, has left us a description in glowing colours. The caliphal palace housed 30,000 persons', of whom 12,000 were servants and 1000 horse and foot guards. The young caliph, whom Nasir saw at a festival riding on a mule, was pleasant looking, clean shaven and dressed simply in a white qnftan and turban. An attendant carried over the caliph's head a parasol enriched with precious stones. The seven galleys drawn up on the bank of the Nile measured 150 cubits over-all by 60 in beam. The caliph owned in the capital 20,000 houses, mostly of brick, rising to a height of five or six stories, and an equal number of shops, which were let at two to ten dinars a month. The main streets were roofed and lighted by lamps. The shopkeepers sold at fixed prices, and if one cheated he was paraded on a camel through the streets ringing a bell and confessing his fault. Even the shops of jewellers and money-changers were left unlocked. The old al-Fustat had seven great mosques; Cairo

had eight.<sup>1</sup> The whole country enjoyed a degree of seeming tranquillity and prosperity that made Nasir enthusiastically declare: "I could neither limit nor estimate its wealth and nowhere have I seen such prosperity as I saw there".<sup>2</sup>

Of all the Egyptian caliphs al-Mustansir was the richest. He inherited millions from his predecessors and lived a life of luxury and ease. He is said to have erected in his palace a Ka'bah-like pavilion where he used to drink to the accompaniment of stringed music and beautiful singers. Here he declared: "This is indeed more pleasant than staring at a Black Stone, listening to the muezzin's drone and drinking impure water". An inventory of his treasures by al-Maqrizi <sup>3</sup> includes precious stones, crystal vases, inlaid gold plates, ivory and ebony inkstands, amber cups, phials of musk, steel mirrors, parasols with gold and silver sticks, chess-boards with gold and silver pawns, jewelled daggers and swords and embroidered fabrics manufactured at Dabiq and Damascus. Exquisite and priceless works of art were dissipated among the Turkish troops. Yet in 1070 this caliph found it necessary to send his daughters and their mother to Baghdad to escape starvation.

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In its general organization the Fatimid state followed the Amir-i\* 'Abbasid, or rather the older Persian prototype. The Egyptian <sup>trallon</sup> al-Qalqashandi<sup>1</sup> (f 1418) has given us in his manual intended for the use of candidates for governmental posts a sketch of the military and administrative systems under the Fatimids. The army consisted of three principal ranks: (1) amirs, who included the highest officers and the sword-bearing escorts of the caliph; (2) officers of the guard, consisting of masters (sing. ustadji) and eunuchs; and (3)

the different regiments carrying such names as Hafizlyah, Juyushiyah, Sudaniyah, after some caliph, vizir or nationality. The vizirs were of several classes, of which the highest were "men of the sword", who supervised the army and waroffice, and "lords of the door", high chamberlains, whose privilege it was to present foreign envoys. The "men of the pen" included the qadi, who was also director of the mint; the inspector of markets tyiuhtasib\ who supervised weights and measures; and the state treasurer, who presided over the bayt al-mal. In the lowest rank of the "men of the pen" stood the great body of civil servants, comprising clerks and secretaries in the various departments. The internal administration of the empire is said to have been the creation of al-Mu'izz' and al-'Aziz' vizir Ya'qub ibn-Killis (f 991), a Baghdad Jew who, accepting Islam, began his political career at Kafur's court and whose expert administration laid the basis of the economic prosperity of the Nile valley under the early Fatimids.<sup>2</sup>

Ibn-Killis was the first outstanding patron of learning in Scientific Fatimid Egypt. He established an academy and spent on it a \*"<sup>d</sup><sub>e</sub><sup>r</sup><sub>ary</sub> thousand dinars per month. In his time flourished the physician progress Muhammad al-Tamimi, who was born in Jerusalem and moved to Egypt about 970. Before him, under the Ikhshlids, flourished the historian Muhammad ibn-Yusuf al-Kindi,<sup>3</sup> who died at al-Fustat in 961. Another historian who died later (1062) in al-Fustat was ibn-Salamah al-Quda'i.<sup>4</sup>

Though some of the early Fatimid caliphs were men of culture, their period was one unproductive of scientists and writers of special merit. Like other caliphs in Baghdad and Cordova,

<sup>1</sup> Subh, vol. iii, pp. 480 seq.

' ibn-al-ṣayrafi, al-Isharah ila Man Nala al-Wizarah, ed. 'Abdullah Mukhli? (Cairo, 1924), pp. 94 seq.

<sup>3</sup> Author of Kitab al-Wulah wa-Kitab al-Qudah, ed. R. Guest (Leyden, 1908-12).

<sup>4</sup> Author of ' (Jyun al-Ma'drif wa-Funun Akhbdr al-Khald'ij (unpublished).

al-ʿAziz was himself a poet and a lover of learning. It was he who made the Azhar Mosque an academy. But most of the learned men at this time not only in law but in history and poetry were members of the faqlh class, which included the judges. The heretical character of the dynasty, whose court did not attract orthodox scientists and littérateurs, together with the insecurity of life throughout the latter part of the period, explains the dearth of intellectual activity.

## Hall of Science

### Astronomy and optics

One of the most remarkable foundations of the Fatimids was the Dar al-Hikmah or Dar al-ʿIlm (hall of wisdom or of science), established by al-Hakim in 1005 for the teaching and propagation of the extreme Shi'ite doctrine. In conjunction with it al-Hakim instituted a fund whose income of 257 dinars was to be spent for copying manuscripts, repairing books and general maintenance.<sup>1</sup> The hall was connected with the royal palace and contained a library and rooms for meetings. Its curriculum comprised, in addition to the specifically Islamic subjects, astronomy and medicine. Though closed in 1119 by al-Malik al-Afdal because of its

heretical teaching, the academy survived until the advent of the Ayyübids.

Al-Hákim was personally interested in astrological calculations; he built on al-Muqattam an observatory to which he often rode before dawn on his grey ass. An informant of the contemporary historian ibn-Hammad<sup>2</sup> saw the astrolabe-like copper instrument erected by al-Hákim on two towers and measured one of its signs of the zodiac, which was three spans in length.

Al-Hakim's court was illumined by \*Ali ibn-Yünus<sup>3</sup> (j- 1009), the greatest astronomer Egypt has ever produced, and abu<sup>c</sup>Ali al-Hasan (L. Alhazen) ibn-al-Haytham, the principal Moslem physicist and student of optics. The astronomical tables (zzf) of ibn-Yünus, bearing the name of his patron, correct the tables current at his time by original observations made with the armillary sphere and the azimuth circle. Ibn-al-Haytham (f ca. 1039), who was born in al-Basrah about 965, tried to regulate for al-Hákim the annual overflow of the Nile, and when he failed he simulated madness and hid himself from the caliph's wrath until the latter's death. No less than a hundred works on mathematics, astronomy, philosophy and medicine are ascribed

<sup>1</sup> Maqrizi, vol. i, p. 459.

<sup>8</sup> P. 50.

- Qifji, pp. 230-31; ibn-Khallikan, vol. iii, p. 6.

to him.<sup>1</sup> The chief work for which he is noted is that on optics, Kztäb al-Manäzir, of which the original is lost but which was translated in the time of Gerard of Cremona or before and was published in Latin in 1572. It was influential in the development of optics in the Middle Ages. Almost all medieval writers on this subject base their works on

Alhazen's *Optica thesaurus*\ Roger Bacon, Leonardo da Vinci and Johann Kepler show traces of its influence. In his work ibn-al-Haytham opposes the theory of Euclid and Ptolemy that the eye sends out visual rays to the object of vision and presents experiments for testing the angles of incidence and reflection. In certain experiments he approaches the theoretical discovery of magnifying lenses which was actually made in Italy three centuries later.

Another important work composed in Egypt in the days of alii äkim is *al-Muntakhab fi ' Iläj al- Ayn*<sup>2</sup> (select material on the treatment of the eye) by 'Ammär ibn-'Ali al-Mawsili. In this the author shows more originality than his contemporary ibn-'Isa in his *Tadhkirah*, which, however, on account of its completeness became the standard work on ophthalmology. 'Ammär describes a radical operation for soft cataract by suction through a hollow tube of his own invention. .

In the days of al-Mustansir the debacle which resulted in the The royal dissipation of his treasures brought about an even greater loss in <sup>library</sup> the dispersion of the royal library started by al-'Aziz and said to have contained at the time 200,000 books. It treasured 2400 illuminated Korans. Among its rarities were manuscripts in the hand of ibn-Muqlah and other master calligraphers; al-\*Aziz had deposited in it an autograph copy of al-Tabari's history. In the loot of 1068 a reporter witnessed twenty-five camels carrying away books. Valuable manuscripts were used for lighting the fires in the homes of Turkish officers and exquisite .bindings served to mend the shoes of their slaves. Al-Mustansir's successors built up new collections. When a century later Saläh-al-Din made his triumphal entry into the royal palace its library still housed over a hundred thousand volumes, some of which together with other treasures were distributed among his men <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-abi-Uṣaybi'ah, vol. ii, pp. 91 seq.\ al-Qifti, pp. 167-8; Muṣṭafa Naʿif, ibn-al-Haytham: Buhūthuhu fī al-Kuṣūf al-Baṣarīyah (Cairo, 1942), pp. ix-xiv.

<sup>2</sup> Partly preserved in MS. form at the Escorial. Casiri, vol. i, p. 317; tr. J. Hirsch

berg et al., Die arabischen Augenärzte nach den Quellen bearbeitet, vol. ii (Leipzig, 1905). <sup>3</sup> Maqrizi, vol. i, pp. 408-9; abu-Shāmah, vol. i, p. 268.

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## An and Architecture

Though unfavourable to the cultivation of science and literature, the Fātimid era was characterized by works of art and architecture of first importance. The prosperity which the country enjoyed under the first two caliphs in Cairo and later under the two vizirs of Armenian origin, a prosperity worthy of the Pharaonic or Alexandrian age, was reflected in the sphere of art.

The oldest surviving structure is the Azhar Mosque, built by Jawhar in 972. Though it was later restored, its older part, which is the central, has preserved the original form. This part is built of brick after the fashion of the ibn-Tūlūn Mosque, has pointed arches and in general betrays Iranian influence. Its minaret is of the heavy square type. The next oldest mosque is that of al-Ḥakīm, begun by his father in 990 and completed about 1012. It follows the same plan as al-Azhar and has a cupola of brickwork supported upon an octagonal drum above the prayer niche. Stone was used in al-Ḥakīm's Mosque, now in ruins, but since the minaret was not square the craftsmen were probably from northern al-Trāq, rather than Syria. The triumph of stone over brick as a

structural material was not effected until the late Fâtimid age and is illustrated in the façade of the al-Aqmar Mosque, built in 1125. This façade may have been due to some Armenian Christian architect. In al-Aqmar we recognize the first appearance of the later general Islamic feature, the corbelled ("stalactite") niche (muqarnas). This pillared mosque and that of al-Sâlihibn-Ruzzîk (ca. 1160) display the bold designs and austere Kufic inscriptions for which Fâtimid art is renowned. Such novel features gradually introduced by Fâtimid architects as the stalactite pendentives and the deep niches in the façade were to undergo further development under the Ayyûbids and Mamluks. Likewise the treatment of inscriptions on stone or wooden panels foreshadows the glories of the later art. The practice of associating a tomb, usually of the founder, with a mosque began in 1085 with Badr al-Jamâli, whose tomb-mosque on the Muqattam set the first example.

Of the great gates that testify to the grandeur of Fâtimid buildings three are extant: Bâb Zawīlah, Bâb al-Nasr and Bâb al-Futûh.<sup>1</sup> These massive gates of Cairo, built by Edessene architects on a Byzantine plan, are among the most enduring relics of Fâtimid Egypt.

<sup>1</sup> See Maqrizi, vol. i, pp. 350 seq.

Among the treasures of the Arab Museum at Cairo are several Decor\*, panels of carved wood dating from the Fatimid period and showing living creatures such as deer attacked by monsters, hares arts seized by eagles and pairs of confronted birds. These motifs suggest borrowing from Sasanid models. The same affinity is noticeable in Fatimid bronzes, most of which were mirrors, ewers or censers. The best-known bronze is the griffin, forty inches high, now in Pisa. The same is true of textiles, samples of which found their way into the West at the time of the Crusades.<sup>1</sup>



Weaving was a national art of Coptic Egypt but even then was influenced by Iranian, particularly Sasanid, models. In Fatimid fabrics we find animals in conventionalized and heraldic poses. Among Egyptian cities Dabiq, Dimyat and Tinnis were noted for their medieval textiles, known after these places as dabiqi, dimyati and tinnisi. The cloth known in Chaucer's time as fustian came from al-Fustat, as the word indicates.

The ceramic art of the Fatimids, like their other arts, follows Iranian patterns. Here as in textiles animal motifs are broadly treated. In his inventory of Fatimid treasures al-Maqrizi<sup>2</sup> lists several specimens of ceramic and metallic arts, including Chinese glazed earthenware. This is one of the first recorded appearances of Chinese ware in the Arab East.<sup>3</sup> Nasir-i-Khus-raw<sup>4</sup> asserts that the Egyptians made earthenware "so fine and diaphanous that one can see one's hand through it".

The earliest-known Islamic bookbindings come from Egypt and may be assigned to the eighth or ninth century. Their decoration and technique have affinity with those of earlier Coptic bindings, from which they were evidently derived. After the development of this Egyptian school tooling and stamping became the most common techniques of Moslem craftsmen working in leather.

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 668.  
626.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Krenkow in *Majallat al-Majma*, vol. xiii (1935), pp. 386-8, where al-Biruni mentions Chinese pottery; *Silsilat al-Tawarikh*, pp. 35'6; al-Dimashqi, *Nukhbat al-Dahr fi 'Ajaib al-Barr w-al-Bahr*, ed. A. F. Mehren (St. Petersburg, 1866), p. 43, where possibly a reference to porcelain is made. F. Sarre in *Die Keramik von Samarra*

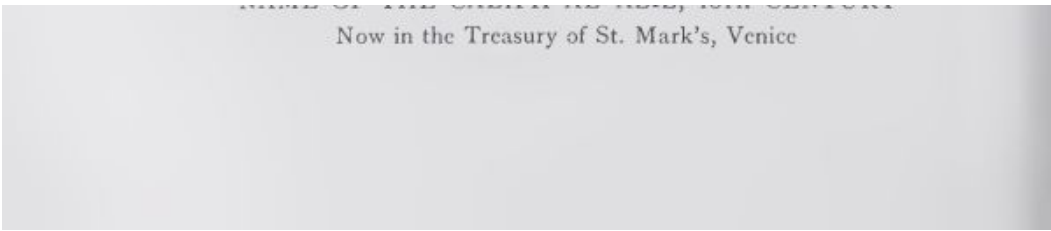
(Berlin, 1925), p. 61, records the discovery of ninth-century porcelain at Samarra.

\* Ed. Schefer, p. 52, tr. p. 151.



*From Arnold and Guillaume, "The Legacy of Islam", by courtesy of the Clarendon Press*

FĀṬIMID CARVED ROCK-CRYSTAL EWER BEARING THE  
NAME OF THE CALIPH AL-'AZĪZ. 10TH CENTURY



From Arnold and Guillaume, "The Legacy of Islam", by  
courtesy of the Clarendon Press

FATIMID CARVED ROCK-CRYSTAL EWER BEARING THE NAME  
OF THE CALIPH AL-'AZIZ, 10th CENTURY Now in the Treasury  
of St. Mark's, Venice

## CHAPTER XLV

### MILITARY CONTACTS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST: THE CRUSADES

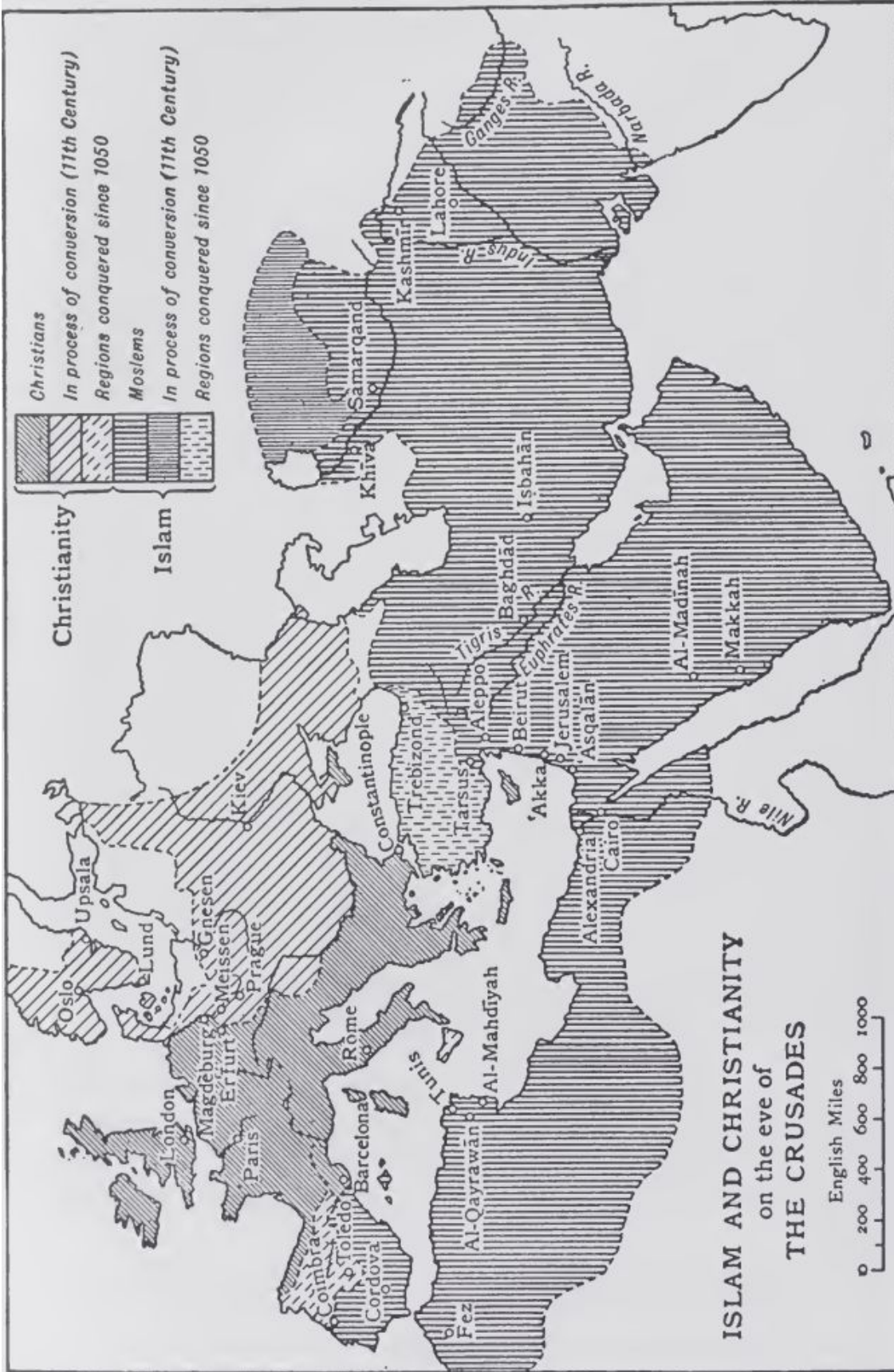
When at the close of the eleventh century the motley hordes of Christendom made their way into Syria to wrest it from Moslem hands, the country presented the spectacle of division and impotence. It was split up among several local Arab chieftains, while in the north the Saljuq Turks were all-powerful and in the south the schismatic Fatimids of Egypt held sway. The population was far from being uniform in composition or even in language. The Druzes in southern Lebanon, the Nusay-riyah in their northern mountains and their neighbours the Isma'ilites, later Assassins, formed three schismatic communities distinct from orthodox Islam. Among the Christian bodies the Maronites of northern Lebanon, who still used Syriac to a considerable extent, constituted the largest minority.

With the advent of the nomadic Saljuqs from Central Asia Saljuqs earlier in the eleventh century, their swarming over the western <sup>0 yna</sup> states of the 'Abbasid caliphate, the establishment of their authority successively in Khurasan,

Persia, al-*Iraq*, Armenia and Asia Minor, and their founding (1055) of a sultanate in Baghdad to which the caliphate was subordinate, we have dealt in a foregoing chapter (XXXII). The Saljuqs of Syria, like those of al-Rum (Asia Minor), formed one of the chief subdivisions of the family, but were not united under one head. Almost every Syrian town of any consequence had at this time its own Saljuq or Arab ruler. Tripoli after 1089 was independent under the Shi'ite banu-'Ammar.<sup>1</sup> Shayzar after 1081 was held by the banu-Munqidh. The Byzantines were time and again capturing and losing towns along the coast and on the northern frontier.

The first Saljuq bands appeared in Syria shortly before 1070. In this year Sultan Alp Arslan made the Arab prince of Aleppo

<sup>1</sup> Consult G. Wiet in *Memorial Henri Basset* (Paris, 1928), vol. ii, pp. 279-84.



his vassal and Alp's general Atsiz entered Jerusalem and wrested Palestine from Fatimid hands. As Sunnite Moslems the Saljuqs considered it their duty to extirpate the Egyptian heresy. Five years later Atsiz acquired Damascus from the same masters. By 1098, however, Jerusalem had reverted to the Fatimids, whose strong fleet had recaptured (1089) all the coast towns, including 'Asqalan (Ascalon), 'Akka (Acre), Tyre (Sur), as far north as Jubayl (Byblos). Alp's son Tutush was the real founder of the Syrian dynasty of Saljuqs. In the spring of 1094 this sultan had established his authority over Aleppo (Halab), al-Ruha' (Edessa) and al-Mawsil, in addition to his Khurasan possessions. But when in the following year he fell in battle, his hard-won Syrian possessions again disintegrated as a result of the rivalry between his two sons Ridwan and Duqaq and the jealousies of his selfseeking generals. Ridwan made Aleppo his capital, where he ruled from 1095 to 1113, and Duqaq (1095-1104) chose Damascus.<sup>1</sup> Hostilities between the two brothers, which began in 1096, formed the central event of their reigns.

Viewed in their rightful setting the Crusades appear as the Complex-medieval chapter in the long story of interaction between East and West, of which the Trojan and Persian wars of antiquity and the imperialistic expansion of modern Western Europe the latest chapter. The geographical fact of difference between East and West acquires its only significance from the competing religious, racial and linguistic differences. More specifically the Crusades represent the reaction of Christian Europe against Moslem Asia, which had been on the offensive since 632 not only in Syria and Asia Minor but in Spain and Sicily also. Among other antecedents we may refer to the migratory and military tendencies of the Teutonic tribes, who had changed the map of Europe since

their entrance into the light of history; the destruction in 1009 by al-Hakim of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the object of pilgrimage for thousands of Europeans and whose keys had been sent (800) to

<sup>1</sup> Saljuqs of Syria, 1094-1117:

1. Tutush ibn-Alp Arslan (1094-5)

2. Ridwan (1095-1113) Duqaq (at Damascus, 1095-1104)

4. Sultan Shah 1114-17!

3. Alp Arslan al-Akhras (1113-14)

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Charlemagne by way of a blessing from the patriarch of Jerusalem,<sup>1</sup> and the hardships to which pilgrims through Moslem Asia Minor were subjected. An immediate cause of the Crusades, however, was the repeated appeal made in 1095 \*° P°P° Urban II by the Emperor Alexius Comnenus, whose Asiatic possessions had been overrun by the Saljuqs as far as the shores of Marmora. These Moslems threatened Constantinople itself. The pope possibly viewed the appeal as affording an opportunity for reuniting the Greek Church and Rome, the final schism between the two having been effected between 1009 and 1054«

When on November 26, 1095, Pope Urban delivered his speech at Clermont in south-eastern France urging the faithful to “enter upon the road to the Holy Sepulchre, wrest it from the wicked race and subject it” to themselves, probably the most effective speech in all history was made. The rallying cry Deus vult (God wills [it]) ran through the land and seized high and low with its psychical contagion.

By the spring of 1097 <sup>a</sup> hundred and fifty thousand men, mostly Franks and Normans and partly rabble, had answered the call and met at Constantinople. The first of the Crusades, so called from the cross borne as a badge, was thus launched.

Not all, of course, who took the cross were actuated by spiritual motives. Several of the leaders, including Bohemond, were intent upon acquiring principalities for themselves. The merchants of Pisa, Venice and Genoa had commercial interests. The romantic, the restless and the adventurous, in addition to the devout, found a new rallying-point and many criminals sought penance thereby. To the great masses in France, Lorraine, Italy and Sicily, with their depressed economic and social conditions, taking the cross was a relief rather than a sacrifice.

#### r. Period of conquest

The customary classification into a definite number of Crusades, seven to nine, is by no means satisfactory. The stream was more or less continuous and the line of demarcation between Crusades not sharply drawn. A more logical division would be into first a period of conquest extending to 1144, when the Atabeg Zangi of al-Mawsil recovered al-Ruha'; second, a period of Moslem reaction inaugurated by Zangi and culminating in the brilliant victories of Salah-al-Din (Saladin); and third,

<sup>1</sup> Consult Einar Joranson in *American Historical Review*, vol. xxxii (1927), pp. 241-61; A. Kleinclausz in *Syria*, vol. vii (1926), pp 211-33. Cf. above, p. 298. a period of civil and petty wars in which the Syro-Egyptian Ayyubids and Egyptian Mamluks figured, ending in 1291, when the Crusaders lost their last foothold on the Syrian mainland.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The period of conquest falls in its entirety before the so-



called second Crusade (1147-9) and the third period coincides roughly with the thirteenth century. One of the Crusades of this last period was directed against Constantinople (1202-4), two against Egypt (1218-21) accomplishing nothing, and one even to Tunisia (1270).

The route of the first Crusaders from their rendezvous at The ByConstantinople lay across Asia Minor. This was now the domain <sup>zantines</sup> of the young Qihj Arslan, Saljuq sultan of Quniyah (1092-1107). Asia It was in meeting his warriors that Christians measured swords <sup>Minor</sup> for the first time with Moslems. After a siege of about a month Nicaea, capital of Qilij's father Sulayman ibn-Qutlumish, founder of the Saljuq dynasty of al-Rum, was captured (June 1097). Other than that the only pitched battle the Crusaders fought was that of Dorylaeum (Eski-Shahr). Here on July i<sup>a</sup> they defeated the forces of Qilij. This victorious march restored to Alexius, who had exacted from Raymond of Toulouse and other Crusading leaders an oath of feudal allegiance, the western half of the peninsula and helped to delay the Turkish invasion of Europe for two centuries and a half.

After crossing the Taurus Mountains and before turning fully First southward a detachment of the Crusading army under Baldwin, <sup>Latin</sup>

J                      princi-

wh'ose father was count of Boulogne, made a detour into the paity eastern region occupied by Christian Armenians, where al-Ruha' was captured early in 1098.<sup>6</sup> Here on Christian territory the first Latin settlement was made and the first Latin state founded. Baldwin became its prince. Other detachments under the Norman Tancred of Southern Italy had turned in the opposite direction to Cilicia, whose

population was likewise Armenian with an admixture of Greeks. Here he occupied Tarsus, the birthplace of St. Paul.

	638 LAST OF THE MEDIEVAL MOSLEM STATES PART V
Antioch reduced	<p>In the meantime the main body had reached Antioch.<sup>1</sup> The city was under a Saljuq amir named Yaghi-Siyan<sup>2</sup> appointed by the third Great Saljuq Malikshah. After a long and arduous siege (October 21, 1097-June 3, 1098) the metropolis of northern Syria fell to the hands of Bohemond through treachery on the part of an Armenian commanding one of the towers. Bohemond was a kinsman of Tancred and the shrewdest of the leaders. The one serious attempt to relieve the city before its fall came from Ridwan of Aleppo.</p> <p>No sooner had the besiegers entered the city than they were themselves besieged by Karbuqa,<sup>3</sup> amir of al-Mawsil, who had rushed from his capital with reinforcements. Enthused by the discovery of the "holy lance", which had pierced the Saviour's side as He hung upon the cross and had lain buried in a church in Antioch, the Christians by a bold sally raised the siege (June 28), almost annihilating Karbuqa's army. The city was left in charge of Bohemond and became the capital of the second principality acquired. For about a century and three-quarters Antioch remained in Christian hands.</p> <p>Dissatisfied, Raymond of Toulouse, the wealthiest leader of the Franks, whose men had made the</p>

sensational discovery in Antioch, pushed southward. After occupying Ma'arrat al-Numan, famous as the birthplace of abu-al-^Ala , his men left the town (January 13, 1099) after destroying "over 100,000" of its population and committing it to the flames.<sup>4</sup> Count Raymond then occupied Hisn al-Akrad,<sup>5</sup> commanding the strategic pass between the plains of the Orontes (al-'Asi) and the Mediterranean, besieged 'Arqah<sup>6</sup> on the western slope of northern Lebanon and occupied Antartus<sup>7</sup> on the coast without resistance. The

<sup>1</sup> Ar. Antakiyah, from Gr. Antiochia after Antiochus, father of its founder

Seleucus I (300 B.C.). As the place where the disciples were first called Christians (Acts 11 : 26), this city was of special significance.

<sup>2</sup> "Baghi-Siyan" in ibn-al-Athir, vol. x, p. 187; abu-al Fida', vol. ii, p. 220; ibn-Khaldun, vol. v, p. 20.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. ibn-al-Athir, vol. x, p. 188; abu-al-Fida , vol. ii, p. 22i. A Turkish adventurer who in 1096 had wrested al-Mawşil from the Arab banu- Uqayl and merged it with the Saljuq empire.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, vol. x, p. 190, copied by abu-al-Fida', loc. cit. Cf. Gesta Francorum, p. 387; Kamal-al-Din, "Muntakhabat min Ta'rikh Halab", in Recueil: orientaux, vol. iii, pp. 586-7.

<sup>6</sup> Literally "castle of the Kurds", today Qal'at al-Hişn; Crac des Chevaliers of the Franks. This

“Crac” was originally “Crat”, a corruption of “Akrad”.

- Birthplace of Alexander Severus (222-35), of the Syrian dynasty of Roman emperors.<sup>7</sup>  
Tortosa of the Latin chronicles, present-day Jartus.

Maronite Christians of Lebanon provided him with guides and a limited number of recruits. All these possessions, however, Raymond relinquished and at the urgent appeal of Godfrey of Bouillon, count of Lorraine and Baldwin's brother, joined the army in its march on Jerusalem, the main goal.

On the way southward al-Ramlah was found deserted and Jerusalem became the first Latin possession in Palestine.<sup>1</sup> On June 7, captured 1099, some forty thousand Crusaders, of whom about twenty thousand were effective troops,<sup>2</sup> stood before the gates of Jerusalem. The Egyptian garrison may be estimated roundly at . about one thousand. Hoping the walls would fall as those of Jericho had done, the Crusaders first marched barefoot around the city, blowing their horns. A month's siege proved more effective. On July 15 the besiegers stormed the city and perpetrated an indiscriminate massacre involving all ages and both sexes. “Heaps of heads and hands and feet were to be seen throughout the streets and squares of the city.”<sup>3</sup> Another important victory over the Egyptians near 'Asqalan about a month later rendered the position of the Latins in Jerusalem more secure. But 'Asqalan remained the base of the Egyptian fleet and the headquarters of a garrison which under the Egyptian vizir al-Malik al-Afdal continued to harass the enemy.<sup>4</sup> A third Latin state, the most important of all, was thus established. Raymond, rather than a clerical, was reportedly offered the kingship but declined because he

was unwilling to wear a crown of gold where the Saviour had worn a crown of thorns.<sup>5</sup> Godfrey,<sup>6</sup> an honest leader and hard fighter, was chosen with the title "baron and defender of the Holy Sepulchre". Many of the Crusaders and pilgrims, considering their vows now fulfilled, sailed back home.

Godfrey's immediate task was to reduce the coast towns, with- Italian out which the occupation of the interior would have been pre-<sup>1</sup> reduce

seaports <sup>1</sup> Ibn-al-Qalanisi, p. 136.

\* Cf. "Annales de Terre Sainte", Archives de Vorient latin, vol. ii (Paris, 1884), pt. 2, p. 429; Raimundus de Agiles, "Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Jerusalem", in Migne, Patrologia Latina, vol. civ, p. 657

<sup>3</sup> Agiles, p. 659. Over 70,000 were slaughtered at the Aqsa Mosque according to ibn-al-Athir, vol. x, p. 194; 65,000 according to Matthew of Edessa, p. 226.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Muyassar, Akhbâr Mişr, ed. Henri Massé (Cairo, 1919), pp. 39 seq.

' Agiles, p. 654.

<sup>4</sup> "Kundufri" in ibn-al-Qalânisi, p. 138; "Kunduhri" in ibn-Taghri-Birdi, ed.

Popp r, vol. ii, pt. 2, p. 304.

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carious and communication with the homeland difficult. The problem was solved with the co-operation of the Italian

ships transporting pilgrims?, whose commanders saw in the possession of such towns new markets and free ports for their merchandise. In the early part of the next year (1100) the Pisans received special rights in Jaffa (Yâfa). Shortly after, Arsüf, Cæsarea (Qaysâriyah) and 'Akka offered tribute in return for a short period of truce.<sup>1</sup> The Venetian fleet, which in the summer of the year of Godfrey's death was operating against Akka, captured Hayfa (Haifa) within a month after his death.<sup>2</sup> Hayfa's garrison and inhabitants were invited to gather round a cross, as a place of safety, and then mercilessly butchered. The Egyptian fleet, the only Moslem one which could come to the defence of these ports, was ineffective if not inactive throughout.

In the meantime Tancred<sup>3</sup> was penetrating inland to the district around the Jordan. Here Baysân, situated on the route of the armies between the Mediterranean coast and Damascus, formed one of the early acquisitions. Nâbulus voluntarily submitted. Tancred took up his residence in Tiberias as Godfrey's vassal. In the following March (1101), however, he relinquished his fief in favour of Antioch, the principality of his uncle Bohe-mond, who had been taken captive by Gumishtigin<sup>4</sup> while on an expedition near Mar'ash. In 1103 Bohemond was released on the payment of a ransom.

Baldwin 1, On the death of Godfrey<sup>5</sup> his men summoned his brother Jerusalem Baldwin<sup>6</sup> to be his successor. Baldwin came from al-Ruha' and on Christmas Day 1100 was crowned king at Bethlehem, rather than in Jerusalem, in deference to the clerical party, which aspired to hold Jerusalem as a church domain.

The Latins had in Baldwin a capable, energetic and aggressive leader. During his reign (1100-18) the kingdom extended from al-'Aqabah at the head of the Red Sea to

Beirût. His cousin and successor Baldwin II<sup>7</sup> (1118-31) added a few towns, <sup>1</sup> Albert of Aix, "Historia Hierosolymitanæ expeditionis", Migne, vol. clxvi, p. 575. <sup>8</sup> Consult ibn-Khallikân, vol. i, p. 101.

<sup>8</sup> "Tankari" in ibn-al-Qalanisi, p. 138; "Dankari" in Usâmah, ed. Hitti, p. 65. <sup>4</sup> Founder in Siwâs of the Turkoman dynasty of the Dânishmands, which was later absorbed in its greater Saljûq neighbour.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn-al-Qalanisi, p. 138 = Gibb, p. 5<sup>1</sup> • ... ..

\* "Baghdawin" in ibn-al-Qalânisi, p. 138; ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. ii, pt. 2, p. 343» cf. p. 327 ("Bardawil").

<sup>7</sup> For a genealogy of the royal house of Jerusalem consult René Grousset, Histoire des croisades, vol. 1 (Paris, 1934), p. 686.

chiefly on the Mediterranean. In breadth the kingdom did not reach beyond the Jordan. Beirût and Sidon were conquered in 1110. The only source from which such cities to the north could hope for aid was Damascus, now under the Atâbeg Tughtigin, formerly a slave of the Saljûq Sultan Tutush and the regent over his young son Duqâq.<sup>7</sup> But Tughtigin was for several years in treaty relations with Baldwin. After a short period of truce, Arsüf and Cæsarea capitulated in 1101 to a Genoese fleet, which received one-third of the spoils and had special quarters assigned to it; but Tyre, secure on its peninsula, remained in Moslem possession until 1124 and 'Asqalân until 1153. In the region south of the Dead Sea Baldwin, in 1115, built a formidable fortress, al-Shawbak,<sup>8</sup> commanding the desert road from Damascus to al-Hijaz and Egypt.

In Syria the city of Tripoli (Tarâbulus, from Gr. Tripolis) was the at this time the most frequented port. Count Raymond <sup>9</sup> had his p<sub>r</sub>'<sup>^</sup><sub>kisK</sub> eye on it ever since he had wound his long way southward from princi-Antioch to Jerusalem. After the establishment of the kingdom he returned and began its siege (1101). In order to isolate the lished town he built two years later a castle <sup>10</sup> on an adjacent hill on the ravine of the abu-'Ali (Qâdîsha) River. The hill was named Mons Pelegrinus (pilgrims' hill) and soon became a centre round which grew a Latin quarter. The siege dragged slowly on in spite of reinforcements from the neighbouring Christians and mountaineers.<sup>11</sup> At intervals adjacent towns were reduced by Raymond. With the co-operation of a Genoese fleet of forty galleys he captured Jubayl in 1104, which henceforth marked the southern limit of the county of Tripoli. Raymond died in 1105 in his castle without having attained his goal; beleaguered Tripoli did not fall till July 12, 1109.

Thus was now founded, in addition to the county of al-Ruha' and the principality of Antioch (which included Cilicia)—both





held as fiefs of Jerusalem [12](#)—the county of Tripoli, also under the kingdom of Jerusalem. Al-Ruha' and Jerusalem were Burgundian princedoms, Antioch was Norman and Tripoli Provençal. These four were the only Latin states ever established on Moslem soil. Their control was confined to the northern part of Syria and to the narrow littoral, a small Christian territory set against a vast and dark background of Islam. Not a town was more than a day's march from the enemy. Even in their states the Latin population was but thinly scattered. Such inland cities as Aleppo, Hamah, Hirs, Ba'labakk and Damascus were never conquered, though at times they paid tribute. In the year beginning September 1156, Damascus, under Nūr-al-Dīn, paid 8000 dinars.[13](#)

With the dynastic successions in these Latin states, their Social squabbles and petty rivalries, we are not concerned. They form <sup>contact\*</sup> a chapter of European rather than of Arab history. But the friendly and peaceful relations developed between the men from the West and the natives should not escape our attention.

It should be remembered in the first place that the Christians came to the Holy Land with the notion that they were far superior to its people, whom they considered idolaters, worshipping Muhammad as a God. At first contact they were disillusioned. As for the impression they left on the Moslems, Usâmah [14](#) gave expression to it when he saw in them "animals possessing the virtues of courage and fighting, but nothing else". The forced association between the two peoples in times of peace—which, it should be noted, were of much longer duration than times of war—wrought a radical change in the feelings of both towards each other. Amicable and neighbourly relations

were established. The Franks employed trusted native workmen and farmers. The feudal system they introduced was gradually adapted to the local tenure of the land. They had carried with them horses, hawks and dogs, and soon agreements were entered into so that hunting parties might be free from danger of attack. Safeconducts for travellers and traders were often exchanged and usually honoured by both sides. The Franks discarded their European dress in favour of the more comfortable and more suitable native clothing. They acquired new tastes in food,

especially those varieties involving the generous use of sugar and spices. They preferred Oriental houses, with their spacious open courts and running water. Some intermarried with natives and the half-caste progeny of native mothers were designated as poulains^ They even in certain instances venerated shrines held equally sacred by Moslems and Jews. In their intermittent quarrels among themselves the Latins often welcomed assistance from the “infidels”, and the Moslems often sought alliances with Latins against fellow Moslems.

## 2. Moslem reaction: The Zangids and

### N urids

The rise of Tmad-al-DIn (the pillar of faith) Zangi, the blueeyed atabeg of al-Mawsil (1127-46), marks the turning of the tide in favour of Islam. Zangi was the forerunner of a series of counter-Crusading heroes which culminated in Salah-al-Din and extended to the Mamluks of the latter half of the following century. Son of a Turkish slave of Malikshah, Zangi carved for himself a principality including Aleppo, Harran and al-Mawsil, where he founded the Zangid dynasty (1127-1262), easily the greatest among the many established by the atabegs. His were the first hammer-

strokes under which the Crusading states were destined to crumble away. The first blow fell on al-Ruha'. Because of its proximity to Baghdad and its control of the main routes between Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean this city for half a century had been the outer rampart of all Latin states in Syria. After a siege of four weeks Zangi captured it (1144) from Joscelin II.<sup>2</sup> This first of the Crusader states to rise and first to fall was strongly fortified but poorly defended. Its capture meant the removal of the wedge thrust between Moslem Syria and al-Traq. In Europe it was a signal for what is usually termed the second Crusade (1147-9), led by Conrad III of Germany and Louis VII of France. With an army made up of French and German knights, of Templars<sup>3</sup> and Hospitallers<sup>4</sup> and of troops provided by Jerusalem, Damascus was laid under a futile siege of four days.<sup>5</sup> Nowhere was anything accomplished by this Crusade.

As champion of the Islamic cause Zangi was succeeded in his

<sup>1</sup> "Kids", "young ones", Latinized Pullani. Cf. Ar. fulan, Mr. So-and-so.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-al-Athir, "Ta'rikh al-Dawlah al-Atabakiyah", in Recueil: orient aux, vol. ii, pt. 2, pp. 118 sea.

<sup>3</sup> Ar. Dawiyah, corruption of a Syriac word for "poor", the original name of the order in Latin being Pauperes Commilitones Christi (Poor Knights of Christ).

<sup>4</sup> Or Knights of St. John; Ar. Isbatariyah (Asbitariyah).

<sup>5</sup> The clearest account is in the work of ibn-al-Qalanisi, pp. 298-9, who was himself at Damascus and held a high post in the city's government.

Syrian possessions by his son Nur-al-Din (light of the faith) Mahmud, who chose Aleppo for his capital. More capable than his father, Nur was the second to face the Franks on more than equal terms. In 1154 he wrested Damascus, without striking a blow, from a successor of Tughtigin, thereby removing the last barrier between Zangid territory and Jerusalem. Gradually he completed the conquest of the county of al-Ruha', whose count, Joscelin II, in 1151 had been carried off a prisoner in chains.<sup>1</sup> Nur also reduced parts of the principality of Antioch, whose young ruler Bohemond III he captured in 1164 together with his ally Raymond III of Tripoli. Both prisoners were later released on payment of ransom, the former after one year of captivity and the latter after nine.

In Palestine, however, the cause of Islam was not so triumphant. Here its bulwark 'Asqalan, which for half a century had resisted the Franks, had fallen (1153) into the hands of Baldwin III of Jerusalem, thus opening the way for the Christians to Egypt- .

Nur-al-Din had an able lieutenant in one Shirkuh, who, under Enter orders from his chief and taking advantage of the decrepitude <sup>aa ,n</sup> of the Fatimid state, managed after several military and diplomatic victories in Egypt to receive in 1169 the vizirate under al-<sup>e</sup>Adid (1160-71), the last of the Fatimid caliphs.<sup>2</sup> His predecessor in this high office, Shawar, had sought and secured against Shirkuh the aid of Amalric I, brother and successor of Baldwin III. Shortly after his investiture Shirkuh died and was succeeded by his brother's son, Salah-al-Din (rectitude of the faith, Saladin) ibn-Ayyub.

Al-Malik al-Nasir al-Sultan Salah-al-Din Yusuf was born in Takrit on the Tigris in 1138 of Kurdish parentage. In the following year his father Ayyub (Job) was appointed commander of Ba'labakk by the Atabeg Zangi. Of the youth

and early education in Syria of Salah-al-Din little is known. Evidently his early interests centred on theological discussion. He did not come into the public eye until 1164, when "in spite of his reluctance" <sup>3</sup> he accompanied his uncle on his first campaign to Egypt. His star then began to rise. The two burning ambitions of his life now

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-al-'Ibri, p. 361; ibn-al-Athir, vol. xi, p. 101. Cf. Kamal-al-Din, *Zubdat al-Lahab min Tdrikh tfalab*, tr. E. Blochet (Paris, 1900), p. 25.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. i, pp. 405-7- Cf. Yaqut, vol. ii. pp. 246-7.

- Abu-Shamah, vol. i, p. 155; abu-al-Fida', vol iii, p. 47.

came to be the substitution of Sunnite for Shi'ite Islam in Egypt and the pressing of the holy war against the Franks. Vizir in 1169, he omitted in 1171 the mention of the name of the Fatimid caliph in the Friday prayer, substituting that of the 'Abbasid caliph al-Mustadf. The momentous change was effected with so little disturbance that not even "two goats locked horns".<sup>1</sup>

For the realization of his other and greater ambition sovereignty over Moslem Syria was a necessary prelude. Here his suzerain Nur-al-Din ruled, and the relations between the two soon became strained. On the death of Nur in 1174 Salah declared his independence in Egypt and, after a few engagements culminating in the battle of Qurun (horns of) Hamah, he wrested Syria from the eleven-year-old Isma'il, son and successor of Nur. In the meantime Salah's elder brother Turan-Shah had succeeded in taking possession of al-Yaman. Al-Hijaz with its holy cities ordinarily went with Egypt. In May 1175, Salah-al-Din at his own request was granted by the 'Abbasid caliph a diploma of investiture over Egypt, al-Maghrib, Nubia, western

Arabia, Palestine and central Syria. The caliph thereby gave away what was in reality not his to give, but what was flattering to him not to refuse. Henceforth Salah considered himself the sole sultan, as his kinsman-historian abu-al-Fida'<sup>2</sup> expresses it. Ten years later he reduced high Mesopotamia and made its various princes his vassals. Nur-al-Din's dream of first enveloping the Franks and then crushing them between the two millstones of Moslem Syria-Mesopotamia and Egypt was being realized in the career of his more illustrious successor.

In the course of these engagements in northern Syria two attempts were made on the life of Salah-al-Din by the Assassins at the instigation of his Moslem enemies. Before this a similar attempt was made on Nur-al-Din and a successful one on the Fatimid al-Amir (1130). Among the Christians the most distinguished victims of this redoubtable order, which was unusually active in Syria at this time, were Raymond II of Tripoli (ca. 1152) and the newly elected king of Jerusalem, Conrad of Montferrat (1192).<sup>3</sup> In 1176 Salah-al-Din laid siege to Masyad, headquarters of Rashid-al-Din Sinan, the Old Man of the Mountain, but raised it on receiving a promise of immunity against future attacks.

<sup>1</sup> Abu-al-Fida', vol. iii, p. 53.    ' Vol. iii, p. 60.    <sup>1</sup> Ibn -al-Athir, vol. xii p. 51.

Sinan had made himself independent of Persia. He controlled an efficient secret service and a pigeon-post enabling him to obtain information by what seemed supernatural means. His fidais (self-sacrificing ones) excelled in the manufacture and use of poisoned knives.<sup>15</sup> It is related that when Henry of Champagne, titular king of Jerusalem, visited him in 1194, the grand master, wanting to impress his guest with the blind obedience he exacted from his henchmen, made a sign to two on top of the castle tower

and they immediately leaped off and were dashed to pieces.<sup>[16](#)</sup>

With the Assassin threat removed Salah was free to devote his Hitt^n

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energies to attacks on the Franks. Victory followed victory. On July 1, 1187, he captured Tiberias after a six days' siege. The battle of Hitt^n (Hattin) followed (July 3-4). It began on Friday, the day of prayer and a favourite one with Salah for fighting. This was a sad day for the Frankish army.

Numbering about twenty thousand and all but dying of thirst and heat, it fell almost in its entirety into the enemy's hands. The list of distinguished captives was headed by Guy de Lusignan, king of Jerusalem. The chivalrous sultan gave the crestfallen monarch a friendly reception; but his companion Reginald of Chatillon, the disturber of peace, merited a different treatment. Reginald was perhaps the most adventurous and least scrupulous of all the Latin leaders and the most facile in the use of Arabic.

Entrusted with the command of al-Karak he more than once had pounced upon peaceful caravans and plundered them as they passed beneath the walls of his castle—and that in violation of treaty relations. He even fitted out a fleet at Aylah and harassed the coasts of the sacred territory of al-Hijaz, preying upon its pilgrims. Salah had sworn to slay with his own hand the breaker of truce. And now the time came for the fulfilment of his oath. Taking advantage of a recognized tradition connected with Arab hospitality Reginald secured a drink of water from his captor's tent. But the drink was not offered by Salah and therefore established no guest and host relationship between captive and captor.<sup>[17](#)</sup> Reginald paid for his treachery with



his life. All the Templars and Hospitallers were also publicly executed.<sup>1</sup>

The victory of Hittin sealed the fate of the Frankish cause. After a week's siege Jerusalem, which had lost its garrison at Hittin, capitulated (October 2, 1187). In the Aqsa Mosque the muezzin's call replaced the Christian gong, and the golden cross which surmounted the Dome of the Rock was torn down by Salah's men.

The capture of the capital of the Latin kingdom gave Salâh-al-Din most of the towns of Frankish Syria-Palestine. In a series of brilliantly executed campaigns most of the remaining strongholds were seized. None could offer resistance, for they had all been denuded of their best defenders on the day of Hittin. Animated with the spirit of holy war which the Crusaders seem now to have lost, the great champion of Islam pushed his conquests north to al-Lâdhiqiyyah (Laodicea, Latakia), Jabalah and Sihyawn, and south to al-Karak and al-Shawbak. All these, as well as Shaqif Arnun,<sup>2</sup> Kawkab,<sup>3</sup> Safad and other thorns in the Moslem side, fell before the close of 1189. The Franks came very near being swept out of the land. Only Antioch, Tripoli and Tyre, besides certain smaller towns and castles, remained in their possession.

### Siege of 'Akka

The fall of the holy city aroused Europe. Hostilities among its rulers were buried. Frederick Barbarossa, emperor of Germany, Richard I Cœur de Lion, king of England, and Philip Augustus, king of France, took the cross. These three were the most powerful sovereigns of Western Europe, and with them the "third Crusade" (1189-92) began. In point of

numbers it was one of the largest. For legend and romance, both Oriental and Occidental, this Crusade, with Salâh-al-Din and Cœur de Lion as its chief figures, has provided the favourite theme.

Frederick, who was the first to start, took the land route and was drowned while crossing a Cilician river. Most of his followers returned home. En route Richard stopped to capture Cyprus,

<sup>1</sup> Abu-Shâmah, vol. ii, pp. 75 seq., who gives an eye-witness's report; ibn-al-Athir, vol. xi, pp. 352-5; Ernoul and Bernard le Trésorier, *Chronique*, ed. M. L. de Mas Latrie (Paris, 1871), pp. 172-4.

<sup>2</sup> On the Leontes (al-Litani), the Belfort of Latin chronicles. Its owner had been known as Reginald of Sidon. For etymology see Hitti, *History of Syria*, including Lebanon and Palestine (London, 1950), p. 60.  
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<sup>8</sup> A newly built Crusading castle north of Baysân by the Jordan. Its full name was Kawkab al-Hawa' (the star of the sky), Belvoir in Latin sources.





Photo: Bunfils

### QAL'AT AL-SHAQF (BELFORT)

Standing on a precipitous rock 1500 feet above the Litani and commanding the mountain pass from Sidon to Damascus

destined to become the last refuge of the Crusaders driven from the mainland.

In the meantime the Latins in the Holy Land had decided on \*Akka as providing the key for the restoration of their lost domain. Against it they marched virtually all their forces, augmented by the remnant of Frederick's army and the contingents of the king of France. King Guy, who had been released by Salah-al-Din on pledging his honour never again to bear arms against him, led the attack. Salah arrived the next day to rescue the city and pitched his camp facing the enemy. The struggle was waged by land and sea. The arrival of Richard was hailed with great rejoicing and bonfires. During the progress of the siege many picturesque incidents took place and were recorded by the contemporary Arabic and Latin chroniclers. A Damascene who compounded explosives and burned three of the besiegers' towers refused the reward offered him by Salah in favour of Allah's reward.<sup>1</sup> A flint stone which formed part of three shiploads taken from Sicily by Richard for use in his mangonels and was said to have destroyed thirteen 'Akkans, was saved and shown to Salah as a curiosity. Salah and Richard even exchanged presents, but never met. Carrier-pigeons and swimmers were used for communication between Salah and the beleaguered garrison, which was entirely cut off from the sea. One such swimmer was drowned while attempting to make the passage, and as his body was washed ashore and the 'Akkans obtained the money and letters he carried, Salah's biographer<sup>2</sup> was prompted to remark, "Never before have we heard of a man receiving a trust in his lifetime and delivering it after his death". Richard offered a handsome reward for every stone dislodged from the walls of the city, and the combatants, as well as the women, performed deeds of great valour. The siege, considered one of the major military operations of medieval times, dragged on for two years (August 27, 1189-July 12, 1191). The Franks had the advantage of a fleet and up-to-date siege artillery; the

Moslems had the advantage of single command. Salah sought but received no aid from the caliph. Finally the garrison surrendered.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khaldun, vol. v, p. 321.

<sup>8</sup> Baha'-al-Din ibn-Shaddad, *Sirat Salah-al-Din: Al-Nau'ddir al-Sultdniyah wal-Mahasin al-Yusufiyah* (Cairo, 1317), p. 120. Cf. tr. at "Saladin"; Or, what Befell Sultan Yusuf London, 1897), P- 2°6«

Two of the conditions of surrender were the release of the garrison on the payment of 200,000 gold pieces and the restoration of the holy cross.<sup>18</sup> When at the end of a month the money was not paid Richard ordered the twenty-seven hundred captives to be slaughtered <sup>19</sup>—an act that stands in conspicuous contrast with Salah's treatment of his prisoners at the capture of Jerusalem. He too had then stipulated for a ransom and several thousand of the poor could not redeem themselves. At the request of his brother, Salah set free a thousand of these poor captives; at the request of the patriarch another batch was released. Then considering that his brother and the patriarch had made their alms and that his own turn had come, Salah freed many of the remaining captives, including numerous women and children, without ransom. •

'Akka now takes the place of Jerusalem<sup>20</sup> in leadership and henceforth negotiations for peace between the two combatant parties go on almost without interruption. Richard, who was full of romantic ideas, proposed that his sister should marry Salah's brother, al-Malik al-'Adil, and that the two should receive Jerusalem as a wedding present, thus ending the strife between Christians and Moslems.<sup>21</sup> On Palm Sunday (May 29, 1192) he knighted with full ceremony al-'Adil's son, al-Malik al-Kamil. Peace was finally

concluded on November 2, 1192, on the general principle that the coast belonged to the Latins, the interior to the Moslems and that pilgrims to the holy city should not be molested. Salah had only a few months to live and enjoy the fruits of peace. On February 19 of the following year he was taken ill with fever in Damascus and died twelve days later at the age of fifty-five. His tomb close by the Umayyad Mosque is still one of the attractions of the Syrian capital.

Salah-al-Din was more than a mere warrior and champion of Sunnite Islam. He patronized scholars, encouraged theological studies, built dykes, dug canals and founded schools and mosques. Among his surviving architectural monuments is the Citadel of Cairo,<sup>1</sup> which he began together with the walls of the city in 1183 and for which he utilized stones from the smaller pyramids. His cabinet included two learned vizirs, al-Qadi al-Fadil<sup>2</sup> and Tmad-al-Din al-Katib al-Isfahani,<sup>3</sup> noted for the style and grace of their correspondence. His last private secretary was Baha'-al-Din ibn-Shaddad,<sup>4</sup> who became his biographer. On overthrowing the Fatimid caliphate, Salah distributed its accumulated treasures, one of which was an historical seventeendirham sapphire as weighed by ibn-al-Athlir<sup>5</sup> in person, among his retainers and troops, keeping nothing for himself. Nor did he touch Nur-al-Din's estate; he left it to the deceased ruler's heir. He himself left on his death forty-seven dirhams and a gold piece.<sup>6</sup> Among the Arabs his name, with Harun's and Baybars', heads the list of popular favourites to the present day. In Europe he touched the fancy of English minstrels as well as modern novelists<sup>7</sup> and is still considered a paragon of chivalry.

### 3. Period of civil and petty wars: The Ayyubids

The sultanate built by Salah-al-Din from the Tigris to the Nile was divided among his various heirs, none of whom inherited his genius. At first his son al-Malik al-Afdal (the superior king) succeeded to his father's crown at Damascus, al-\*Aziz (the mighty) at Cairo, al-Zahir (the victorious) at Aleppo, and Salah's younger brother and confidant al-\*Adil at al-Karak and al-Shawbak. But between 1196 and 1199 al-iAdil, taking advantage of the discord among his nephews, acquired for himself sovereignty over Egypt and most of Syria. In 1200 he appointed one of his sons governor of Mesopotamia. Al-\*Adil, the Sapha-din<sup>8</sup> of Latin chronicles, was the chief agent in the peace negotiations of 1192 and maintained throughout his rule friendly relations with the Crusaders. Small collisions were not lacking, but his general policy was one of peace and the furtherance of commerce with the Frankish colonies. He allowed the Venetians

<sup>1</sup> Qal'at al-Jabal. His inscription can still be read over the old gate.

\* Ibn-Khallikan, vol.i, pp. 509 seq.\ Subki, Tabaqat, vol. iv, pp. 253-4.

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, pp. 495 seq.\ Suyuti, Husn, vol. i, p. 270. His al-Fath was drawn upon in the composition of this chapter.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Khallikan, vol. iii, pp. 428 seq. His Sir ah has been extensively used in this chapter.

<sup>6</sup> Vol. xi, p. 242.  
p. 91.

<sup>8</sup> Abu-al-Fida\*, vol. iii,

<sup>7</sup> E.g. Walter Scott in his Talisman, Lessing in Nathan der Weise. Owing to Salah-al-Din's fame a legend grew up to

explain the greatness of Thomas Becket on the ground of his descent from a Saracen mother.

<sup>8</sup> From his honorific title Savf-al-Din (the sword of religion). Ibn-Khallikan. vol. ii, p. 446.

to establish special markets with inns <sup>1</sup> at Alexandria and the Pisans to establish consuls there. His name is still borne in Damascus by al-'Adiliyah school, which he partly built.<sup>2</sup>

After al-\*Adil's death in 1218 several Ayyubid branches, all sprung from him, reigned in Egypt, Damascus and Mesopotamia. Other branches, descended from other members of the Ayyubid family, controlled Hama, Hamah and al-Yaman. The Egyptian Ayyubids were the chief branch and frequently contested with their Damascene kinsmen the sovereignty over Syria. The north Syrian branches were swept away in 1260 by the Tartar avalanche of Hulagu, with the exception of the insignificant Hamah branch which continued under the Mamluks and numbered in its line the historian-king abu-al-Fida' (f 1332), a descendant of Salah-al-Din's brother.

In the course of these dynastic turmoils not only did Islam lose its power of aggression, but one after another of Salah-al-Din's conquests, e.g. Beirut, Safad, Tiberias, \*Asqalan and even Jerusalem (1229), reverted to Frankish hands. But the Franks were in no position to take full advantage of the situation. They were themselves in as bad a plight, if not worse. Their colonies depended for their maintenance upon new recruits from Europe which were not forthcoming. Among themselves quarrels between Genoese and Venetians, jealousies between Templars and Hospitallers, personal squabbles among leaders and contests for the empty title of king of Jerusalem—these were the order of the day. In their disputes, as we learned above,



one side would often secure aid from Moslems against the other.

The first serious engagements since Salah-al-Din's death between Franks and natives took place on Egyptian soil under al-Kamil (1218-38). Al-Kamil, the Egyptian successor of his father al-\*Adil, was now the leading Ayyubid figure and nominally received the homage of Syria. His first task was to clear his land of the Crusaders who shortly before his father's death had landed near Dimyat (Damietta) and in the following year had occupied that town. This invasion of Egypt was prompted by the fresh realization by the maritime republics of Italy that the centre of

<sup>1</sup> Ar. funduq, from Gr. pandokeion\ Ar. bunduq (hazelnut), from Gr. pontikos (adjective, from Pontos); Bunduqiyah, Ar. name of Venice (abu-al-Fida', Taqwim al-Buldan, ed. Reinaud and de Slane, Paris, 1840, p. 210), from Veneticuin.

<sup>2</sup> The names of ibn-Khallikan, al-Subki and others are associated with this school, whose building now houses the Arab Academy of Damascus.

Islamic power had shifted from Syria to Egypt and that only by the conquest of the latter could their ships reach the Red Sea and participate in the opulent commerce of the Indian Ocean. After almost two years of conflict (November 1219-August 1221) al-Kamil forced the Franks to abandon Dimyat and granted them a free passage.<sup>1</sup>

Like his father, al-Kamil took a lively interest in irrigation and agriculture and signed several commercial treaties with European countries. He was so favourably disposed toward his Christian subjects that the Coptic church still recognizes him as the most beneficent sovereign it ever had.

The year after his accession St. Francis of Assisi visited his court and discussed religion with him. His interest in learning may be illustrated by a personal call he once made to a Cairene subject, 'Umar ibn-al-Farid (1181-1235), the greatest Sufi poet the Arabs produced, who is said to have refused to receive his royal guest. Formerly a friend of Richard, al-Kamil now entered into friendly relations with Frederick II, who in 1227 set out on a Crusade. In 1229 an infamous treaty was concluded yielding to Frederick Jerusalem, along with a corridor connecting it with 'Akka, and guaranteeing al-Kamil Frederick's aid against his enemies, most of whom were Ayyubids.<sup>2</sup> This was the most singular treaty between a Christian and a Moslem power before Ottoman days. Jerusalem remained in Frankish hands until 1244 when, at the invitation of al-Kamil's second successor al-Malik al-Salih Najm-aLDin Ayyub (1240-49), a contingent of Khwarizm Turks, previously dislodged from their Central Asian abode by Chingiz Khan, restored the city to Islam.<sup>3</sup>

St. Louis As he lay on his deathbed al-Salih received the news that Dimyat was again threatened, this time by Louis IX, king of France, and his chevaliers of the "sixth Crusade". The town surrendered (June 6, 1249) without resistance; but as the French army marched on Cairo in a region intersected by canals, while the Nile was at its height, pestilence spread in its ranks, its line of communication was cut off and it was entirely destroyed (April 1250). King Louis, with most of his nobles, was taken prisoner.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Abu-al-Fida', vol. iii, pp. 135-7; ibn-Khaldun, vol. v, pp. 340-50; ibn-Khallikan, vol. ii, p. 451, ibn-Iyas, *Badai' al-Zuhur fi Waqai' al-Duhur* (Bulaq, 1311), vol. i, pp. 79-80.

\* Abu-al-Fida', vol. iii, p. 148; ibn-al-Athir, vol. xii, p. 315. <sup>8</sup>  
See above, p. 482.

<sup>4</sup> Maqrizi, vol. ii, pp. 236-7; Joinville, *Histoire de Saint Louis*, ed. N. de Wailly (Paris, 1874), pp. 169 seq.

In the meantime al-Salih had passed away (November 1249). His daring and energetic widow Shajar-al-Durr (the tree of A<sup>1</sup>^3 pearls) kept the news secret for three months until his son and to the successor Turan-Shah had returned from Mesopotamia.<sup>1</sup> Turan failed to make himself agreeable to the slaves (jnamlilks) of his father and with the connivance of his stepmother was murdered in 1250. Shajar proclaimed herself queen of the Moslems<sup>2</sup> and a six-year-old scion of the Damascene Ayyubids, al-Ashraf Musa, was accorded the nominal dignity of joint sovereignty; but the titular ruler was the Mamluk Aybak, founder of the Mamluk dynasty. After a month of captivity Louis and his men were released on the payment of a ransom and the restoration of Dimyat.<sup>3</sup> His work in Syria, where he remained from 1250 to 1254, consisted in the fortifying of such ports as 'Akka, Hayfa, Caesarea and Sidon. In 1270 he led another futile Crusade, now to Tunisia, where he died. Of all the Crusading leaders his, by far, was the purest and noblest character. His "whole life was a prayer, his noble aim was to do God's will".

Among the Mamluks it was the fourth, al-Malik al-Zahir The last Baybars (1260-77), who inaugurated the series of sultans who dealt the final blows to the Crusaders' cause. Baybars had distinguished himself as a general under his predecessor Qutuz when at 'Ayn Jalut he inflicted (September 3, 1260) a crushing

<sup>1</sup> A tree of the Egyptian Ayyubids, all of whom, excepting al-'Aziz, al-Manşur and al-Ashraf, were at least for a time acknowledged by Damascus:

Ayyub

#### 4. Al-'Adil I

Sayf-al-Din

(1199-1218)

Saläh-al-Din (1169-93)

1 1 Afdal) 2. Al-'Aziz	1 (Al-Zähir)
Tmad-al-Din	:
(1193-8)	• 5. Al-Kämil
1	: Muhammad

. Al-Manşür Muhammad : (1218-38)

(1198-9) i j

: 6. Al-'Adil II i (1238-40)

9. Al-Ashraf Müsa (1250-52)

' Abu-al-Fidä', vol. iii, p. 190; Suyüfi, ffusn,

<sup>1</sup> Joinville, pp. 201 seq.

(Al-Sälih Ismä'il of

Damascus)

I

7. Al-Sälih Najm-al-Din + Shajar-al-Durr

(1240-49)            (1249-50)

I

—

8. Al-Mu'afzam Tūrān-Shäh

(1250)

vol. ii, p. 39-

656 LAST OF THE MEDIEVAL MOSLEM STATES PART V defeat on the Tartars. The Mongolian leader was Kitbugha, a Nestorian, whose advance guard had penetrated Palestine down to Ghazzah.<sup>1</sup> This victory is memorable for the history of civilization; if the Mongols had taken Cairo they would have probably destroyed its treasures and manuscripts. Besides averting the danger threatening Syria and Egypt it paved the way for the reunion of the two neighbouring countries, a reunion which lasted under the Mamluk sceptre until the Ottoman conquest two centuries and a half later.

Baybars' ambition was to be a second Salâh-al-Dîn in the holy war against Crusader towns. Especially provoked was he when he found those towns making common cause with the Hülâguid Īl-Khâns of Persia, now favourably disposed toward the Christian religion. From 1263 to 1271 he conducted almost annual raids against them. One after another of the Latin establishments yielded with little or no resistance. The two military orders which now occupied the leading fortresses of Frankish Syria and formed its bulwark were the ones who received his most devastating blows. But

throughout the opposition was so weak that hardly a single battle of importance was fought in the open field.

In 1263 Baybars took al-Karak from an Ayyübid and demolished the venerated church of Nazareth (al-Nâsirah). In 1265 he seized Cæsarea, and after a forty-day siege received the surrender of Arsüf from the Hospitallers. On July 23, 1266, the Templar garrison of Safad capitulated on condition that the lives of its two thousand knights be spared. Without delay and in spite of the amnesty granted, the sultan ordered them all executed on a neighbouring hill.<sup>2</sup> The story of the victory of “the Alexander of his age and the pillar of faith” is still engraved on the walls of Safad; and the bridge he built over the Jordan stands to the present day bearing his inscription, with the figure of a lion on either side. In 1268 Jaffa was captured without resistance; Shaqîf Arnün capitulated after a short siege; and what is more important Antioch, which had maintained amicable relations with the Tartars, surrendered (May 21). Antioch’s garrison with others to the number of 16,000 were slaughtered and some 100,000 are said to have been led to captivity, some to be sold in the markets of Egypt. When the plunder was divided, money

<sup>1</sup> Maqrizi, tr. Quatremère, vol. i (pt. 1), pp. 98, 104.

• Ibid. (pt. 2), pp. 29-30; abu-al-Fida’, vol. iv, p. 3.

was measured out in cups; an infant fetched twelve dirhams and a young girl five. The city with its citadel and world-renowned churches was given to the flames—a blow from which it has never recovered.<sup>22</sup> On the fall of Antioch a number of minor Latin strongholds in the vicinity were abandoned. In 1271 the formidable Hisn al-Akrad, the principal retreat of the Hospitallers and probably the most beautiful military monument of the Middle Ages,

surrendered after a siege lasting from March 24 to April 8. The adjacent castles of Masyad, al-Qadmus, al-Kahf and al-Khawabi, which belonged to the Assassins who were in alliance with the Hospitallers and often paid tribute to them, were all reduced. The last nest of an order which for years had hatched horror and intrigue was thereby for ever destroyed. Both the Templars of Antartus and the Hospitallers of al-Marqab now hastened to make peace.

Baybars had a worthy successor in Qalawun (1279-90), who Qalawun was almost as energetic and redoubtable an anti-Crusader. Baybars' truce with the Templars of Antartus was renewed (April 15, 1282) for another term of ten years and ten months. A similar treaty was signed (July 18, 1285) with the princess of Tyre who controlled Beirut.<sup>23</sup> On the battlefield he established his right to the honorific title he bore, al-Malik al-Mansur (the victorious king). Al-Marqab,<sup>24</sup> which still looks like a dreadnought crowning a hill near Tartus and overlooking the sea, yielded after a siege of thirty-eight days, ending May 25, 1285. The besiegers' arrowheads can still be seen imbedded in its outer walls. Abu-al-Fida',<sup>25</sup> who was then twelve years old, had his first experience in warfare on this occasion. The citadel's Knights of St. John were conducted under escort to Tripoli. Tripoli, another of the early conquests of the Crusaders and now the largest town in their possession, succumbed in April 1289; the city and its citadel were almost entirely ruined. Abu-al-Fida'<sup>5</sup> himself was oppressed by the smell of the corpses lying thick on the island outside the port. After Tripoli the stronghold of al-Batrun to the south was captured. Qalawun commemorated his victories with inscriptions which, like those of Baybars, can still be read on the walls of the citadels he reduced.

- Vol. iv, p. 24.

## 'Akka

'Akka was now the only place of military importance left. In the midst of his preparations against it Qalâwün died and was succeeded by his son al-Ashraf (1290-93), who commenced where his father had left off. After an investment of over a month, in which ninety-two catapults were used against its ramparts, this last bulwark of the Latin Orient was stormed (May 1291). The help received from Cyprus by sea did not save the day. Its Templar defenders, to whom a safe-conduct had been promised, were massacred. The city was plundered, its fortifications were dismantled and houses set on fire.<sup>1</sup>

The fall of 'Akka sealed the fate of the half-dozen towns still retained along the coast, and none resisted the victorious enemy. Tyre was abandoned on May 18, Sidon on July 14. Beirüt capitulated on July 21. Antartüs was occupied on August 3 and the deserted Templar castle of 'Athlith (Castrum Peregrinorum, Château Pèlerin) was destroyed about the middle of that month.<sup>2</sup> One of the most dramatic chapters in the history of Syria was closed.<sup>3</sup> \*

<sup>1</sup> Abu-al-Fida' (who took part in the siege), vol. iv, pp. 25-6; Maqrizi, tr. Quatre-mère, vol. ii (pt. 3), pp. 125-9; Archives, vol. ii, pt. 2, p. 460; Les gestes des Chiprois, ed. G. Raynaud (Geneva, 1887), p. 256.

<sup>1</sup> See Sanuto in Bongars, vol. ii, pp. 231 seq.

<sup>8</sup> Later Crusades were directed against Rhodes, Smyrna, Alexandria and Turkey in Europe, culminating in the Crusade of Nicopolis in 1396. See A. S. Atiya, The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages (London, 1938).







From Henri Lavoix, " Monnaies à legendes arabes frappées en Syrie par les Croisés"

A FRANKISH DINAR STRUCK AT 'AKKA IN-1251

Bearing Arabie inscription

CHAPTER XLVI

## CULTURAL CONTACTS

BECAUSE of the richness of the Crusades in picturesque and romantic incidents, their historical importance has been somewhat exaggerated. For the Occident they meant much more than for the Orient. Their civilizing influence was artistic, industrial and commercial rather than scientific and literary. In Syria they left in their wake havoc and ruin intensified by the Mamluk destruction of most of those maritime towns formerly occupied by the Franks. Throughout the Near East they bequeathed a legacy of ill will between Moslems and Christians that has not yet been forgotten.

Notwithstanding its civil and holy wars Syria enjoyed under Nurid the Nurids and Ayyubids—more particularly under Nur-al-Din and Salah-al-Din—the most brilliant period in its Moslem history, with the exception of the Umayyad age. Its capital, Damascus, still bears evidences of the architectural and educational activities of members of these two houses. Not only did Nur renovate the walls of the city with their towers and gates and erect government buildings which remained in use until recent times, but he established in Damascus the earliest school devoted to the science of tradition,<sup>1</sup> the celebrated hospital bearing his name<sup>2</sup> and the first of those madrasahs (academies) which after his time began to flourish in the land. The Nuri hospital, the second in Damascus after that of al-Walid, functioned later as a school of medicine.<sup>3</sup> The madrasahs were in reality collegiate mosques or school-mosques, but they boarded students and followed the type evolved by the Nizamiyah. Such collegiate mosques, all of the ShafFi rite, were founded by Nur in Aleppo, Hirs, Hamah and Ba'labakk. His inscriptions on these buildings and on other monuments of his are of special

<sup>1</sup> In this Dar al-Hadith al-Nuriyah, the contemporary ibn-  
\*Asakir (vol. i, p. 222) lectured.

\* Al-Maristan al-Nuri. Ibn-Jub.ayr. p. 283; ibn-Khallikan,  
vol. ii, p. 521.

• Cf. ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. ii, p. IQ2. The building is still  
standing.

interest for Arabic paleography, since it was about this time  
that the angular Kufic, in which until then inscriptions were  
exclusively cut, was replaced by the rounded naskhi. An  
inscription of his on a western tower of the Citadel of Aleppo  
is still legible. The existing fortifications of this citadel,  
which is mentioned in Assyrian and Hittite records and is  
considered a masterpiece of ancient military architecture,  
owe their restoration to this Syrian sultan. Nur's tomb in his  
Damascus academy, al-Nuriyah, is held in reverence even  
today. Through this madrasah the connection between  
mausoleum and mosque was established in Syria.<sup>1</sup>



By courtesy of K. A. C. Creswell

THE ANCIENT CITADEL OF ALEPPO Restored by Nur-al-Din (f  
1174)

During the Mamluk period, which in art was a continuation of the Ayyubid, it became the regular practice for the founder of a collegiate mosque to be buried under a dome {qubbali) in the building.

Salah-al-Din displayed even more munificent architectural and educational activity than his predecessor. His policy was to combat Shfite heresy and pro-Fatimid tendencies by means of education. Next to Nizam-al-Mulk he is reputed to have been the greatest builder of academies in Islam. Under him Damascus became a city of schools. Ibn-Jubayr,<sup>2</sup> who visited it in 1184, refers to its twenty madrasahs, two free hospitals and numerous dervish “monasteries”. Salah introduced these “monasteries”<sup>3</sup> into Egypt.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. above, p. 630.

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 283-4; above, pp. 408. 412.

\* Ar. khanaqdh, from Pers, khdnagah. Suyufi, Husn^ vol. ii, p. 158.

“The classical Arab art of the East is represented by the Ayyübid buildings of Damascus and Aleppo dating from the thirteenth J^ribu\* century, under the Ayyûbids and their earliest Mameluke successors.”<sup>1</sup> The Ayyübid school of Syrian architecture was continued in Egypt under the Mamlûks and produced some of the most exquisite monuments which Arab art can boast. Its characteristics are strength and solidity. On its durable material of fine stone even the simplest decorative motif assumes infinite grace. But like the Andalusian school it depended for its elegance and beauty upon excessive decoration.

It was Salâh-al-Dîn who introduced the madrasah type of school into Jerusalem and Egypt.<sup>2</sup> During his reign al-

Hijâz also saw its first institution of this type. Notable among his Egyptian academies was the one at Cairo bearing his name, al-Salâhiyah.<sup>3</sup> Ibn-Jubayr<sup>4</sup> found several madrasahs in Alexandria. None of these Egyptian institutions have survived, but their architectural influence is manifest. It produced in later years the finest Arab monuments of Egypt, among which the most splendid example is the collegiate mosque of Sultan Hasan in Cairo. Its general plan consists of a square central court (sahn) open to the sky, flanked by four walls with four halls or porticos (sing, liwân) forming the arms of a cross. Each of these four halls was reserved for instruction in one of the orthodox rites.

Besides schools Salâh-al-Dîn maintained in Cairo two hospitals.<sup>5</sup> The edifices were probably planned after the Nûrid hospital in Damascus. Before his time ibn-Tûlûn and Kâfûr al-Ikhshidi had established in Egypt similar free public institutions. Hospital architecture followed also the mosque plan, but has left no traces. Only in military architecture do we have survivals, the Citadel of Cairo being the principal example. This citadel shows that Salah owed a part of his knowledge of fortification to the Norman castles that had by this time sprung up in Palestine. He probably used Christian prisoners in its construction. It was in this citadel that he made his residence, while in Cairo, surrounded by a galaxy of talent which included, besides his

<sup>1</sup> René Grousset, *The Civilizations of the East*, vol. i, *The Near and Middle East*, tr. Catherine A. Phillips (New York, 1931), p. 235; M. van Berchem, *Matériaux pour un corpus inscriptionum Arabicarum* pt. 2, vol. i (Cairo, 1922), pp. 87 seq.

» Ibn-Khallikan, vol. iii, p. 521.  
pp. 157-8.

\* Suyûtf, *Ifusn*, vol. ii,

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 41-2.

\* Ibn-Jubayr, pp. 51-2.

brilliant vizirs,<sup>1</sup> such men as his distinguished Jewish physician ibn-Maymūn and the versatile, prolific 'Iraqi scholar <sup>f</sup>Abd-al-Latif al-Baghdadi (i 1162-1231), whose short description of Egypt<sup>2</sup> stands out among the important topographical works of the Middle Ages.

In science and philosophy

Despite this manifestation of intellectual and educational activity Islamic culture in the epoch of the Crusades was already decadent in the East. For some time prior to that epoch it had ceased to be a creative force. In philosophy, medicine, music and other disciplines, almost all its great lights had vanished. This partly explains why Syria, which was throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries a particular focus of relations between Islam and Western Christianity, proved as a vehicle of Arabic influence very much less important than either Spain, Sicily, North Africa or even the Byzantine empire. Although in Syria Islam acted upon European Christianity by direct impact upon the Crusaders, by the repercussion of that impact upon the West and by a process of infiltration along the routes of commerce, yet the spiritual and intellectual impress it left is barely noticeable. On the other hand, we should recall that the Franks in Syria, besides possessing a lower level of culture than their antagonists, were largely foreign legions quartered in castles and barracks and in close contact with the native tillers of the soil and artisans rather than with the intelligentsia. Then there were the nationalistic and religious prejudices and animosities which thwarted the play of interactive forces. In science and art the Franks had very little to teach the natives. The comparative standing of medical lore in the two camps may be illustrated by the anecdotes cleverly told by Usâmah,<sup>3</sup> who also pokes fun at

the Franks' judicial procedure with its trial by duel and by water.

Concrete instances of scientific and philosophic transmission are not entirely lacking. Adelard of Bath, whose translations of Arabic works on astronomy and geometry have already been mentioned, visited Antioch and Tarsus early in the twelfth century. About a century later the first European algebraist, Leonardo Fibonacci, who dedicated a treatise on square num-

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 652.

<sup>a</sup> *Al-Ifadah w-al-I'tibâr fi al-Umûr al-Mushâhadah w-al-Hawâdith al-Mu âyanah bi-Ard Misr*, ed. D. J. White (Tübingen, 1789); tr. into Latin, German and French. Ibn-abi-Uṣaybi'ah, vol. ii, p. 207; Kutubi, vol. ii. p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 13'. seq.— Arab-Syrian Gentleman, pp. 162 seq.

bers to Frederick II, visited Egypt and Syria. Frederick himself entertained the ambition of reconciling Islam and Christianity and patronized several translators from Arabic. A Pisan, Stephen of Antioch, translated the important medical work of al-Majûsi at Antioch in 1127. This was the only known Arabic work the Franks carried back with them; but since in the twelfth century we find a number of hospices and hospitals, chiefly lazar-houses for leprosy, springing up all over Europe, we may assume that the idea of systematic hospitalization received a stimulus from the Moslem Orient. This Orient was also responsible for the réintroduction into Europe of public baths, an institution which the Romans patronized but the Christians discouraged. It was again in Antioch that Philip of Tripoli found about 1247 a manuscript of the Arabic *Sirr al-Asrar* purporting to have been composed by Aristotle for the



guidance of his great pupil, Alexander. Translated by Philip into Latin as *Secretum secre-torum*, this pseudo-Aristotelian work, containing the essence of practical wisdom and occult science, became one of the most popular books of the later Middle Ages.

In literature the influence was more pervasive. The legends of the Holy Grail have elements of undoubted Syrian origin. The Crusaders must have heard stories from the *Kalilah* and the *Arabian Nights* and carried them back with them. Chaucer's *Squieres Tale* is an *Arabian Nights* story. From oral sources Boccaccio derived the Oriental tales incorporated in his *Decameron*. To the Crusaders we may also ascribe European missionary interest in Arabic and other Islamic languages. Men like Raymond Lull (f 1315) were convinced by the failure of the Crusades of the futility of the military method in dealing with the "infidel". Lull, a Catalan, was the first European to promote Oriental studies as an instrument of a pacific Crusade in which persuasion should replace violence. In 1276 he founded at Miramar a college of friars for the study of Arabic; it was probably through his influence that in 1311 the Council of Vienne resolved to create chairs of Arabic and Tartar at the Universities of Paris, Louvain and Salamanca.

In the realm of warfare the influences, as is to be expected, are more noticeable. The use of the crossbow, the wearing of heavy military mail by knight and horse and the use of cotton pads under the armour are of Crusading origin. In Syria the Franks adopted the

664 LAST OF THE MEDIEVAL MOSLEM STATES PART 26  
and the naker<sup>27</sup> for their military bands, which hitherto had been served only by trumpets and horns. They learned from the natives how to train carrier-pigeons<sup>28</sup> to convey military information and borrowed from them the practice of

celebrating victory by illuminations and the knightly sport of the tournament (Jarid}. In fact several features of the chivalry institution developed on the plains of Syria. The growing use of armorial bearings and heraldic devices was due to contact with Moslem knights. The two-headed eagle,<sup>29</sup> the fymr-de-lis<sup>30</sup> and the two keys may be cited as elements of Moslem heraldry of this period. Salah-al-Din probably had the eagle as his crest. Most Mamlüks bore names of animals, the corresponding images of which they blazoned on their shields. Mamlük rulers had different corps, which gave rise to the practice of distinguishing by heraldic designs on shields, banners, badges and coats of arms. Baybars crest was a lion, like that of ibn-Tülün before him, and Sultan Barqūq's (f 1398) was the falcon. In Europe coats of arms appear in a rudimentary form at the end of the eleventh century; the beginning of English heraldry dates from the early part of the twelfth. Among modern Moslems the star and crescent and the lion and sun form the sole remnant of heraldry. "Azure" (Ar. láz award') and other terms used in heraldry testify to this connection between the European and Moslem institutions.

## Gunpowder

The Crusades also fostered the improvement of siege tactics, including the art of sapping and mining, the employment of mangonels and battering-rams and the application of various combustibles and explosives. Gunpowder was evidently invented in China, where it was used mainly as an incendiary. About 1240 it was introduced by the Mongols into Europe. There the application of its explosive force to the propulsion of missiles, i.e. the invention of fire-arms, was accomplished about a century later. No historian of the Crusades makes an allusion to it. The first European recipe for gunpowder we find appended to a work written about 1300 by a certain Marc the Greek; Bacon's recipe is

apocryphal. Shortly before 1300 Hasan al-Rammah (the lancer) Najm-al-Din al-Ahdab, probably a Syrian, composed a treatise entitled *al-Furilsiyah w-al-Manasib al-Har-biyah*<sup>1</sup> (horsemanship and military exercises), which mentions saltpetre, a component of powder, and contains pyrotechnic recipes to which those ascribed to Marc bear close resemblance. One of the earliest references to the use of gunpowder is in al-'Umari (f 1348).<sup>2</sup>

The Crusaders took with them from Italy and Normandy a substantial knowledge of military masonry which was partly <sup>structure</sup> passed on to the Arabs, as the architecture of the Citadel of Cairo indicates. Castles and churches were their main structures. Most of the castles, including Hisn al-Akrad, al-Marqab and al-Shaqif (Belfort), are extant. In Jerusalem parts of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, "Solomon's Stables" near the Aqsa Mosque and several of the vaulted bazaars are their work. The Church of the Sepulchre and the Dome of the Rock were deliberately imitated by several churches of the round "temple" type, of which four are found in England and others in France, Spain and Germany. In Beirut the so-called 'Umari Mosque was built as the Church of St. John by Baldwin I in mo. The Crusading arch is generally of the pointed form and the vaulting simple, usually groined. The most beautiful relic of Frankish art in Cairo is a doorway taken from the Christian church of 'Akka in 1291 and incorporated in the Mosque of al-Nasir.<sup>8</sup>

In the realm of agriculture, industry and commerce the Crusades produced much greater results than in the realm of <sup>of</sup> intellect. They explain the popularization in the regions of the Western Mediterranean of such new plants and crops as sesame and carob, millet and rice,<sup>4</sup> lemons and melons, apricots and shallots. "Carob"

is Arabic kharrub (originally Assyrian) ; “ lemon” is Arabic laymun^ of Indic or Malay origin; and both “ shallot ” and “ scallion”, meaning originally the onion of Ascalon, preserve the name of the Palestinian town. For many years apricots were called the plums of Damascus. Also there were other trees and products which were simultaneously diffused

<sup>1</sup> Extracts in Ar. and Fr. tr. by Reinaud and Fave, *Journal asiatique*, ser. 4, vol. xiv (1849), PP- <sup>2</sup>57’3<sup>2</sup>7- See also vol. xii, pp. 193 seq.

- Ta'rtf (Cairo, 1312), p. 208.  
p. 681.

<sup>3</sup> See below,

\* Cf. above, p 528. “Sesame”, Ar. nmstm, is derived from Assyrian through Gr.



## INTERIOR OF THE CRUSADING CHURCH OF NOTRE DAME AT ANTARTUS (TORTOSA, MODERN TARTUS)

Photo taken 1929

through Moslem Spain and Sicily, and in certain instances it is not possible to tell whether the bridge was Syria or one of these two other countries.

While in the Orient, the Franks acquired new tastes, especially in perfumes, spices, sweetmeats and other tropical products of Arabia and India with which the marts of Syria were well stocked. These tastes later supported the commerce of Italian and Mediterranean cities. Incense and other fragrant gums of Arabia, the damask rose (*Rosa damascena*) and sweet scents in which Damascus specialized and numerous fragrant volatile oils and attars<sup>1</sup> of Persia became favourites. Alum and aloes figured among the new drugs with which they became acquainted. At the capture of Caesarea in 1101 the Genoese, we are told, received as their portion of the booty more than sixteen thousand pounds of pepper. Cloves and other aromatic spices together with pepper and similar condiments came into use in the Occident in the twelfth century, and from that time on no banquet was complete without spiced dishes. Ginger (Ar. and Pers, *zanjabil*, of Skr. origin) was added to the Crusaders' menu in Egypt. More important than all others is sugar (Ar. *sukkar*, ultimately Skr.). Europeans had hitherto used honey for sweetening their foods. On the maritime plain of Syria, where children can still be seen sucking sugar-cane, the Franks became acquainted with this plant which has since played such an important role in our domestic economy and medical prescriptions. William of Tyre<sup>2</sup> (f ca. 1190), who knew Arabic and wrote the most elaborate medieval account of the Crusades (from 1095 to 1184), has left us interesting observations on the

sugar plantations of his native town. Sugar was the first luxury introduced into the West and nothing else so delighted the Western palate. With it went soft drinks, waters tintured by distillation with roses, violets or other flowers, and all varieties of candy and sweetmeats.

Windmills appear first in Normandy in 1180 and betray WaterCrusading origin.<sup>3</sup> Water-wheels (sing, noria, from Ar. naurah) <sup>wheels</sup> existed in Europe before this period but the Crusaders took back with them an improved type. This Syrian type may still be seen in Germany near Bayreuth.<sup>4</sup> In Syria it goes back to Roman

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 351.

<sup>2</sup> "Historia rerum", in Recueil: occidentaux, vol. i, p. 5591 Jacques de Vitry,

"Historia Hierosolimitana", in Bongars, vol. i, p. 1075- \*  
CL <sup>above</sup> > P- 3 ^ 5\*

<sup>4</sup> M. Sobemheim, art. "Hama", Encyclopedia op Islam.

days, but was presumably improved upon by such native engineers as Qaysar ibn-Musafir Ta'asif (f 1251),<sup>31</sup> an Egyptian, who was in the service of the ruler of Hamah and produced the earliest but one of the Arabic celestial globes extant.<sup>32</sup> As early as the days of Yaqut<sup>33</sup> (f 1229) and abu-al-Fida'<sup>34</sup> (f 1331), Hamah was noted for its water-wheels. These wheels, whose perpetual wailing has lulled to sleep countless generations of Hamatites, are still one of the glories of that ancient town.

Not all of the new tastes developed were gastronomic. Especially in the matter of fashions, clothing and home furnishing were new desires and demands created. The

custom of wearing beards was then spread. Returning Crusaders introduced into their homes the rugs, carpets and tapestries of which Western and Central Asia had for long made a specialty. Fabrics such as muslin, baldachin, damask,<sup>35</sup> sarcenet or Saracen stuff, atlas (from Ar. atlas), velvet, silk and satin,<sup>®</sup> came to be more appreciated. Jewels manufactured by Damascene and Cairene Jews, toilet articles and powders became much sought after. Mirrors of glass coated with a metallic film replaced those of polished steel. Camlets (sing, khamlali), camel's-hair and fine furs acquired wider vogue. The rosary became familiar.<sup>36</sup> European pilgrims sent home Arab reliquaries for the keeping of Christian relics.<sup>8</sup> With fine clothes and metallic wares went lacquers and dyestuffs, such as indigo, and new colours, such as lilac (fr. Ar. laylak, originally Pers.), carmine and crimson (both fr. Ar. qirmizi, originally Skr.). Gradually centres appeared in Europe for manufacturing wares, rugs and cloths in imitation of the Oriental products, as at Arras, whose fabrics became highly prized. Stained-glass windows became popular in churches.<sup>9</sup> Benjamin of Tudela,<sup>10</sup> who visited Antioch under the Franks, speaks of its manufacture of glass. Oriental works of art in glass, pottery, gold, silver and enamel served as models for European products.

The creation of a new European market for Oriental agricultural products and industrial commodities, together with the necessity of transporting pilgrims and Crusaders, stimulated maritime activity and international trade to an extent unknown since Roman days. Marseille began to rival the Italian city republics as a shipping centre and share in the accruing wealth. The financial needs of the new situation necessitated a larger supply and a more rapid circulation of money. A system of credit notes was thereupon devised. Firms of bankers arose in Genoa and Pisa with branch offices in the Levant. The Templars began to use



letters of credit,<sup>37</sup> receive money on deposit and lend at interest. Perhaps the earliest gold coin struck by Latins was the Byzantinius Saracenatus minted by Venetians in the Holy Land and bearing Arabic inscriptions. The consular office, primarily commercial rather than diplomatic, now made its appearance. The first consuls in history were Genoese accredited to \*Akka in 1180. They were followed by those sent to Egypt.<sup>38</sup>

An important invention connected with this maritime activity Compass of the Crusades is the compass. The Chinese were probably the first to discover the directive property of the magnetic needle, but the Moslems, who very early carried on lively trade between the Persian Gulf and Far Eastern waters,<sup>39 40</sup> were the first to make practical use of that discovery by applying the needle to navigation. This application must have taken place in the eleventh century if not earlier, but for commercial reasons was kept secret. In Europe, Italian sailors were the first to use the compass. The actual use naturally antedates the literary references, of which the first to occur in a Moslem work is in a Persian collection of anecdotes, J aw amt al-Hikaydt w a-Law amt al-Riwdydtf written by Muhammad al-'Awfi about 1230. One story tells how the author as a sailor found his way by means of a fish rubbed with a magnet. The first literary mention in Latin sources belongs to the late twelfth century, thus antedating the Persian reference.

The number of Franks assimilated by the native Syrians and Racial Palestinians is hard to estimate.<sup>41</sup> Among the modern population <sup>a mix</sup>

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of such towns as Ihdin in northern Lebanon, Bethlehem and al-\*Arish, the sight of men and women with blue eyes and

fair hair is quite common. Certain families, mainly Christian Lebanese, such as the Karam, the Faranjiyah (Frankish) and the Salibi (Crusading), have preserved traditions of descent from Frankish ancestry. Among other family names Sawaya is said to be derived from Savoie, Duwayhi from de Douai and Bar-dawil is undoubtedly Baldwin.<sup>1</sup> The last name also figures in the topography of Palestine and northern Sinai. One Palestinian village, Sinjil, perpetuates the name of Saint-Gilles, and another, al-Raynah, that of Renaud. On the other hand the Druze claim to some connection with a count de Dreux is due to a popular etymology that has no basis in fact.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 640, n. 6.

<sup>8</sup> Hitti, *Druze People*, p. 15.



British Museum

DINAR OF THE MAMLUK BAYBARS Struck 667 (1268/9),  
showing the lion below his name

## THE MAMLUKS, LAST MEDIEVAL DYNASTY OF ARAB WORLD

In other than Moslem annals the rise and prosperity of such a dynasty as the Mamluk is hardly conceivable. Even in these annals it is most remarkable, almost unique. The Mamluks were, as the name indicates,<sup>1</sup> a dynasty of slaves, slaves of varied races and nationalities forming a military oligarchy in an alien land. These slave sultans cleared their Syrian-Egyptian domain of the remnant of the Crusaders. They checked for ever the advance of the redoubtable Mongol hordes of Hulagu and of Timur, who might otherwise have changed the entire course of history and culture in Western Asia and Egypt. Because of this check Egypt was spared the devastation that befell Syria and al-'Iraq and enjoyed a continuity in culture and political institutions which no other Moslem land outside Arabia enjoyed. For about two and three-quarter centuries (1250-1517) the Mamluks dominated one of the most turbulent areas of the world, keeping themselves all the while racially distinct. Though on the whole uncultured and bloodthirsty, their keen appreciation of art and architecture would have been a credit to any civilized dynasty and makes Cairo even now one of the beauty spots of the Moslem world. And finally, when they were overthrown in 1517 by the Ottoman Salim, the last of the local dynasties that had developed on the ruins of the Arab caliphate expired, clearing the way for the establishment of a new and non-Arab caliphate, that of the Ottoman Turks.

The foundation of Mamluk power was laid by Shajar-al-Durr, Dynasty widow of the Ayyubid al-Salih (f 1249) and originally a Turkish or Armenian slave. Formerly a bondmaid and member of the harem of the Caliph al-Musta'sim, Shajar

entered the service of al-Salih, by whom she was freed after she had borne him a son. On her assumption of sovereign power her former caliph-master addressed a scathing note to the amirs of Egypt saying: "If ye have no man to rule you, let us know and we will send you one."<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup> See above, p. 235, n. I. <sup>1</sup> Suyutf, flusn, vol. ii, p. 39. See above, p. 655.

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For eighty days the sultanah, the only Moslem woman to rule a country in North Africa and Western Asia, continued to function as sole sovereign in the area which had once produced Cleopatra and Zenobia. She struck coins in her own name<sup>42</sup> and had herself mentioned in the Friday prayer. And when the amirs chose her associate and commander-in-chief (atabeg al- askar), Tzz-al-Din Aybak,<sup>43</sup> for sultan, she married him. In the first years of his reign Aybak was busy crushing the legitimist Ayyubid party of Syria, deposing the child joint-king al-Ashraf and doing away with his own general who had distinguished himself against Louis IX. In the meantime the queen was not only sharing her consort's power but keeping him in subordination. Finally, on hearing that he was contemplating another marriage, she had him murdered while taking his bath, after a ball game, in the royal palace in the Citadel of Cairo. Immediately after she was herself battered to death with wooden shoes by the slave women of Aybak's first wife and her body was cast from a tower.<sup>44</sup>

1

Cf. Maqrizi, vol. ii, p. 264; Yaqut, vol. iii, p. 901.

2

P. 53 (text), p. 155 tr. . ”

[3](#)

• Vol. i, pp. 414 seq. Cf. ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. ii, pt. 2, pp. 181-2.

[4](#)

See W. B. Stevenson, *The Crusaders in the East* (Cambridge, 1907), p. 17.

[5](#)

<sup>1</sup> *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolymitanorum*, ed. Heinrich Hagenmeyer (Heidelberg, 1890), p. 197, n. 11, p. 205, n. 62; Fulcher, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, ed. Hagenmeyer (Heidelberg, 1913), p. 192, n. 10. Cf. ibn-al-Qalanisi, ed. Amedroz, p. 134; tr. II. A. R. Gibb, *The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades* (London, 1932), p. 42.

[6](#)

<sup>1</sup> Matthew of Edessa, *Chronique*, ed. E. Dulaurier (Paris, 1855), p. 218.

[7](#)

Following the example of many other atâbegs, he usurped the power in 1103 and became the founder of the Bûrid dynasty, which lasted till 1154.

[8](#)

<sup>1</sup> Called by the Latins *Mons Regalis* (Mont Royal, Montréal). According to early chronicles *Crac de Montréal* refers to its sister to the north-east, *Crac des Moabites* (al-Karak; Ar.

karak is from Aram, k ark ha, town, whence Karkh, name of a quarter in Baghdad).

[9](#)

\* Because he was called Raymond of Saint-Gilles, the Arabs referred to him as Çanjil or ibn-şanjil.

[10](#)

Repaired later by the Turks, this Qal'at Tarâbulus has been used until recently

[11](#)

as a prison.  
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<sup>6</sup> Ibn-Khaldün, vol. v, p.

[12](#)

I.e. allied states which recognized the primacy of Jerusalem;  
John L. La Monte,

[13](#)

Feudal Monarchy in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem  
(Cambridge, 1932), p. 187.

[14](#)

<sup>a</sup> Ibn-al-Qalanisi, p. 336. [14](#) Ed. Hitti, p. 132 = Arab-Syrian Gentleman, p. 161.

[15](#)

Ibn-Baftutah, vol. i, pp. 166-7.

[16](#)

Marinus Sanuto, "Liber secretorum" in Bongars, Gesta Det per Francoi (Hanau, 161i), vol. ii, p. 201.

[17](#)

See above, p. 25.

[18](#)

Abu-Shamah, vol. ii, p. 188: 'Imad-al-Din (al-Isfahani), al-Fath al-Qussi fi al-Fath al-Qudsi, ed. C. de Landberg (Leyden, 1888), p. 357; ibn-al-'Ibri, pp. 386-7; abu-al-Fida', vol. iii, pp. 83-4.

[19](#)

Benedict of Peterborough, ed. W. Stubbs (London, 1867), vol. ii, p. 189; ibn-Shaddad, pp. 164-5.

[20](#)

Ibn-al-'Ibri, p. 413, speaks of the "king of 'Akka".

[21](#)

\* Cf. abu-al-Fida', vol. iii, p. 84.

[22](#)

Ibn-al-Tbri, p. 500; Maqrizi, tr. Quatremere, vol. i (pt. 2), pp. 52-4; abu-al-Fida', vol. iv, pp. 4-5.

[23](#)

Maqrizi has preserved the texts of both treaties, ed. Quatremere, vol. ii (pt. 3), pp. 172-6, 177-8, tr. pp. 22-31, 212-2T.

[24](#)

\* “The watch tower”, Castrum Mergathum, Margat.

[25](#)

Vol. iv, p. 22.

[26](#)

Fr. tambour, from Ar. tunbūr, from Pers, tumbūr, a kind of lute.

[27](#)

■ Fr. nacaire, fr. Ar. naqqarah, a kettledrum.

[28](#)

• Consult ṣalih ibn-Yahya, Tarikh Bayrut, ed. L. Cheikho (Beirut, 1898), pp. 60-61; al-Zahiri, Zubdat Kashf al-Mamdlik, ed. P. Ravaisse (Paris, 1894), pp. 116-17. Cf. Suyūfi, Husn, vol. ii, p. 186.

[29](#)

Zangi’s coins of Sinjar show this symbol of Sumerian antiquity. Above, p. 479.

[30](#)

<sup>4</sup> L. A. Mayer, Saracenic Heraldry: A Survey (Oxford, 1933), pp. [27](#)3\*4- This, one of the most widely spread elements of



decorative art, was known in Assyria. It still figures on the Canadian coat of arms for France.

[31](#)

See ibn-Khallikan, tr. de Slane, vol. iii, pp. 471-3. Ibn-Baftutah, vol. iv, p. 255,

[32](#)

refers to water-wheels in Canton, China.

[33](#)

<sup>8</sup> Now in the Museo Nazionale of Naples.

[34](#)

<sup>8</sup> Vol. ii, p. 331.      [34](#) Taqwim, p. 263.      [45](#) See above, pp. 346, 592.

[35](#)

- From Ar. zayiuni, a corruption of Ts'ien-t'ang (modern Hang-chou), a city in

[36](#)

<sup>8</sup> See above, p. 631.      <sup>9</sup> See above, p. 346.      <sup>10</sup> Tr. Asher, p. 58.

[37](#)

Eng. "check" was borrowed from Ar. \$akk in India in the 18th century.

[38](#)

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 652-3'  
343

[39](#) See above, < p.

[39](#)

<sup>4</sup> See Muhammad Nizamu'd-Din, Introduction to the Jawdmi al-Hikayat

[40](#)

(London, 1929), p. 251. Cf. F. Hirth and W. W. Rockhill, Chau-Ju-Kua (St.

[41](#)

Petersburg, 1911), pp. 28-9» Cf. S. S. Nadavi in Islamic Culture, vol. xvi (1942)»

[42](#)

With the exception of certain coins struck in India and Faris, hers are the only ones bearing a Moslem woman's name.

[43](#)

<sup>1</sup> He was a Turk, as the name (ay moon+fo^ prince) indicates. Maqrizi, tr. Quatremere, vol. i (pt. 1), p. 1.

[44](#)

- Ibid. p. 72; Khitat, vol. ii, p. 237; abu-al-Fida', vol. iii, p. 201.

[45](#)

south-east China from which this silk originally came. ' See above, p. 438.

Bahri and

Burji Mamlüks

Aybak (1250-57) was the first of the Mamluk sultans. The series is somewhat arbitrarily divided into two dynasties: Bahri (1250-1390) and Burji (1382-1517). The Bahri Mamluks had their origin in the purchased bodyguard of the Ayyubid al-Salih,<sup>1</sup> who settled his slaves in barracks on the isle of al-Rawdah in the Nile.<sup>2 3</sup> The Bahris were chiefly Turks and Mongols.® In their policy of securing the services of foreign slaves as a bodyguard the Ayyubids followed the precedent established by the caliphs of Baghdad, with the same eventual results.<sup>4</sup> The bondmen of yesterday became the army commanders of today and the sultans of tomorrow.

The Burjis represent a later importation. Their origin was likewise a bodyguard, but it was founded by the Bahri Mamluk Qalawun (1279-90). They were mostly Circassian slaves who were quartered in the towers (Ar. sing, burf) of the citadel. In all there were twenty-four Bahri Mamluks,<sup>5</sup> excluding Shajar-

- For table of Bahri Mamluks see p. 673.

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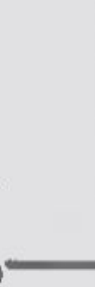
**7. Qalāwūn**  
**(1279–90)**



**12. Baybars**  
**(1308–9)**

19. Al-İlāsan	20. Al-Şālih
(1347-51, 1354-61)	(1351-4)

**22. Al-Ashraf  
Sha'bān  
(1363-76)**



**23. 'Alā'-al-Dīn 'Alī  
(1376-81)**



**24. Al-Ṣāliḥ Ḥājjī  
(1381-2,  
1389-90)**

THE BAHRI MAMLUKS

(Al-Şālih Ayyūb)

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bars (1260–77)

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6. Salāmish  
(1279)

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II. Lājīn  
(1296-8)

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Quṭuz (1259-60) 4. Bay  
5. Barakah  
(1277-9)



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**10. Kitbugha  
(1294-6)**

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17. Al-Kāmil Sha'bān (1345-6)	18. Al-Muzaḥḥar Ḥājjī (1346-7)
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(Shajar-al-Durr)

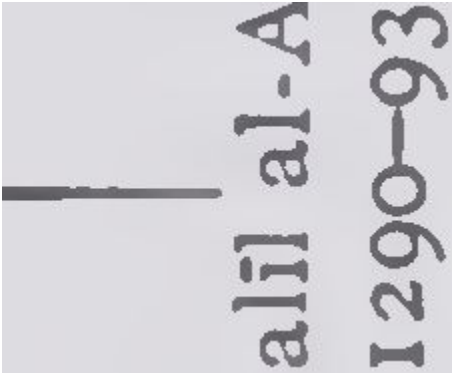
9. Al-Nāşir	16.
(1293-4,	
1298-1308,	
1309-40)	
Alḥmad	
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Hot«.— Starred lines indicate a master and slave relationshi

al-Durr, and twenty-three Burjis. The Burjis recognized no principle of hereditary succession and followed no policy of nepotism. Their throne belonged to him who could capture it or induce the amirs to elect him to it. In several Bahri and Burji instances slaves rather than sons of the sultan succeeded him. A larere number of the sultans met

violent deaths while still young. The average reign of the Mamlük sultans was less than six years.

### Ayyubids and Tartars repelled

The first task confronting the new dynasty was to consolidate the kingdom and guard its frontiers. Aybak spent most of his time on the battlefield in Syria, Palestine and Egypt. Al-Muzaffar Sayf-al-Din Qutuz (1259-60), while acting as regent {naib al-saltanali} and before deposing his young protégé, al-Mansür 'Ali, Aybak's son, and usurping the throne, repelled an attack from the Ayyübid sultan of al-Karak. The Syrian Ayyübids considered themselves the legitimate successors of their Egyptian kinsmen. No sooner had the Ayyübid invasion of Egypt been repulsed than the Tartar army of Hülâgu, led by Kitbugha, became a danger. Hülâgu's envoys<sup>1</sup> to Qutuz were executed by the latter and the issue was settled at 'Ayn Jâlüt (1260). In this battle Baybars led the vanguard and distinguished himself as a general, but Qutuz took command in person towards the end. The Tartar army was routed, leaving Kitbugha and other leaders dead on the field. Egypt was spared the horrible desolation visited upon its neighbour, which was now occupied by the Mamlük army. Baybars expected to receive Aleppo as a fief in recognition of his military service, but the sultan disappointed him. On the way homeward through Syria, while hunting with Qutuz, a fellow-conspirator addressed the sultan and kissed his hand while Baybars stabbed him in the neck with a sword (October 24, 1260).<sup>2</sup> The murdered sultan was succeeded by the murderer. Qutuz claimed to have been a grand-nephew of a Khwârizm Shah<sup>3</sup> and is said to have been captured by the Tartars and sold in Damascus, where he was purchased by Aybak.

### Baybars

Al-Malik al-Zâhir (victorious) Rukn-al-Dîn (pillar of the faith)

<sup>1</sup> The letter they carried is preserved in Maqrîzi, tr. Quatremère, vol. i (pt. 1), pp. 101-2.

<sup>2</sup> Abu-al-Fida, vol. iii, p. 216; ibn-Khaldûn, vol. v, p. 380. Cf. Maqrîzi, tr. Quatremère, vol. i (pt. j), p. 113.

\* Suyû[i, Husn, vol. ii, p. 40. See above, p. 482.

Baybars al-Bunduqdarî<sup>1</sup> (1260-77), the most distinguished of Mamluk sultans, was originally a Turkoman slave. When young he was sold into Damascus for eight hundred dirhams, but was returned on account of a defect in one of his blue eyes. His last name, meaning belonging to the arbalester (bunduqdar} ^ he acquired from the master who owned him in Hamah before he was purchased by the Ayyubid al-Salih.<sup>2</sup> Al-Salih first appointed him commander of a section of his bodyguard, from which position he worked his way into the highest in the land. Tall, dusky in complexion, commanding in voice, brave and energetic, he possessed the qualities of leadership among men.

Baybars was the first great Mamluk, the real founder of Mamluk power. His first laurels he won against the Mongols on the field of \*Ayn Jalut; but his title to fame rests mainly on his numerous campaigns against the Crusaders.<sup>3</sup> It was these campaigns which broke the backbone of Frankish opposition and made possible the final victories won by his successors Qalawun and al-Ashraf. In connection with one of his last expeditions into northern Syria he crushed for ever the power of the Assassins. In the meantime his generals had extended his dominion westward over the Berbers and southward over Nubia,<sup>4</sup> which was now permanently conquered by an Egyptian sultan.



Baybars was more than a military leader. Not only did he organize the army, rebuild the navy and strengthen the fortresses of Syria, but he dug canals, improved harbours and connected Cairo and Damascus by a swift postal service requiring only four days. Relays of horses stood in readiness at each post station. The sultan could play polo in both capitals almost within the same week. Besides the ordinary mail the Mamluks perfected the pigeon post, whose carrierseven under the Fatimids had their pedigrees kept in special registers.<sup>5</sup> Baybars fostered public works, beautified mosques and established religious and charitable endowments. Of his architectural monuments<sup>6</sup> both the great mosque (1269) and the school bearing his name have survived. The mosque was turned into a fort by Napoleon and later into a rationing depot by the British army of occupation. The present Zahirlyah library in Damascus is the structure <sup>1</sup> “Bendocquedar” of Marco Polo, tr. Yule, 2nd ed., vol. i, p. 22.

\* Abu-al-Fida', vol. iv, p. II; Kutubi, vol. i, p. 109.

' See above, pp. 655 seq.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Khaldun, vol. v, p. 400.

\* See above, pp. 323, 664.  
pp.

\* Consult Kutubi, vol. i,

under the dome of which he was buried. He was the first sultan in Egypt to appoint four qadis, representing the four orthodox rites, and organize the Egyptian mahm/il on a systematic and permanent basis. His religious orthodoxy and zeal, together with the glory he brought to Islam in the holy war, combined to make his name a rival to that of Harun. In legendary history it looms even higher than Salah-al-Din's. His romance and that of 'Antar remain to the present day more popular in the Arab Orient than the Arabian Nights.

A feature of Baybars' reign was the many alliances he struck with Mongol and European powers. Soon after he became sultan he allied himself with the chief khan of the Golden Horde<sup>1</sup> or Mongols of Qipchaq (Baybars' birthplace) in the valley of the Volga. Common opposition to the Il-Khans of Persia dictated the policy. The Egyptian envoys went through Constantinople, where Michael Palaeologus, foe of Latin Christianity, authorized the restoration of the ancient mosque<sup>2</sup> destroyed by the Crusaders during their occupation of that city. Baybars sent, at the emperor's request, a Melkite patriarch to Constantinople for those of that persuasion in its realm. He signed commercial treaties with Charles of Anjou (1264), king of Sicily and brother of Louis IX, as well as with James of Aragon and Alfonso of Seville.

The

caliphal episode

A most spectacular event of Baybars' reign was his inauguration of a new series of \*Abbasid caliphs who carried the name but none of the authority of the office. The sultan's object was to confer legitimacy upon his crown, give his court an air of primacy in Moslem eyes and check the 'Alid intrigues which, ever since Fatimid days, were especially rife in Egypt. To this end he invited from Damascus in June 1261, an uncle of the last 'Abbasid caliph and son of the Caliph al-Zahir who had escaped the Baghdad massacre, and installed him with great pomp and ceremony as the Caliph al-Mustansir.<sup>3</sup> The would-be pensioner-caliph was first escorted from Syria in state, with even Jews and Christians carrying aloft the Torah and the Gospel, and the soundness of his genealogy was passed upon by a council of jurists. The sultan in turn received from his puppet caliph a

<sup>1</sup> Eastern Mongols, wrongly identified with the Kalmucks, western Mongols; see above, p. 483, n. 4.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 621.

<sup>3</sup> Maqrizi, tr. Quatremere, vol. i (pt. 1), pp. 146-68; ibn-Khaldun, vol. v, pp. 3.82-3; abu-al-Fida', vol. in, p. 222; ibn-Iyas, vol. i, pp. 100-101.

677 diploma of investiture giving him authority over Egypt, Syria, Diyar Bakr, al-Hijaz, al-Yaman and the land of the Euphrates. Three months later Baybars rashly set out from Cairo to reestablish his caliph in Baghdad, but after reaching Damascus abandoned him to his fate. Al-Mustansir was attacked in the desert by the Mongol governor of Baghdad and was never heard from again.

One year later another scion of the 'Abbasid house made his way to Cairo and was installed by Baybars as al-Hakim. One descendant of al-Hakim after another, for two and a half centuries, held the pseudo-caliphate, whose incumbents were satisfied with having their names inscribed on the coinage and mentioned in the Friday prayers in Egypt and Syria. With one exception none of them had his name cited in the Makkah prayers. Their most important duties consisted in administering the religious endowments (waqf) and officiating at the ceremony of installing the new sultan. Certain Moslem rulers, including some from India and the Ottoman Bayazid I (1394), secured from them diplomas of investiture, which in reality had no significance. In 1412, on the death of the Burji al-Nasir, the Caliph al-'Adil al-Musta'in declared himself sultan and ruled for a few days, only to be deposed by al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh (1412—21).<sup>1</sup> Certain caliphs were dismissed from office on grounds of disloyalty to the Bahri 'Ali (1376-81) and to the Burjis Barquq (1382-98) and Inal (1453-60). When in 1517 the

Ottoman Sultan Salim wrested Egypt from the Mamluks he carried away with him to Constantinople the Caliph al-Mutawakkil, the last of the line.<sup>2</sup>

After Baybars the outstanding Mamluk figure was al-Malik Qaiawun al-Mansur Sayf-al-Din Qaiawun (1279-90). Originally, like Baybars, a Turkoman slave from Qipchaq, the youthful Qaiawun Mongols was carried to Egypt, and likewise sold to al-Salih, as his surname al-Salihi indicates. His other surname al-Alfi (thousander) suggests the heavy price paid for him, a thousand dinars,<sup>3</sup> and shows that the Mamluk sultans were not ashamed of their lowly origin. Qaiawun secured the throne by deposing his ward Salamish (1279), Baybars' seven-year-old son, who had succeeded his nineteen-year-old brother, the pleasure-loving Barakah (1277-9).

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. vi, pt. 2, pp. 267-8, 303-21;; Suyuti, ZZ^w.vol. ii, pp.65-71; ibn-Iyas, vol. i. pp. 357'9

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 489, below, p. 705.

• Suyuti, Hush, vol. ii, p. 80; Maqrizi, tr. Quatremere, vol ii (pt. 3), p. I.

Qalawun was the only Mamluk in whose line the succession continued to the fourth generation. The last Bahri, al-Salih Hajji, was his great-grandson.

No sooner had Qalawun established himself in power than the Mongol Il-Khans of Persia began to threaten his Syrian domain. Among these Abaqa (1265-81), who was Hulagu's son and successor, and Abaqa's son Arghun (1284-91), had Christian leanings and entered into negotiations with the pope and other European courts urging a fresh Crusade with a view to driving the Egyptians out of Syria. The scheme did

not materialize. Abaqa's army, though superior in number and reinforced by Armenians, Franks and Georgians, was decisively defeated in 1280 at Harns.<sup>1</sup> Shortly after this the Mongols adopted Islam. The sultan strengthened the existing amicable relations with the Golden Horde, the Byzantine emperor, the republic of Genoa and the kings of France, Castile and Sicily. Even the ruler of Ceylon dispatched to his court an embassy with a letter which no one in Cairo could read. Little Armenia was ravaged for the help its people had given to the Mongols and the Crusaders' castles were reduced.<sup>2</sup> Tripoli, which was levelled to the ground, was rebuilt a few years later, not on its former site, but several miles from the sea where it now stands on the banks of the abu-\*Ali (Qadisha). Toward the end of his reign Qalawun issued orders excluding his Christian subjects from all government offices.

### His hospital

Qalawun won distinction in other fields. He renovated on a grand scale the citadels of Aleppo, Ba'labakk and Damascus. In Cairo he erected a hospital, connected with a school-mosque, and a mausoleum<sup>3</sup> (tomb-"chapel"), which exhibits to the present day its remarkable arabesque tracery and fine marble mosaic. But his hospital (al-Maristan al-Mansuri), whose remains are among the earliest relics of a Moslem hospital extant, is the most famous of his buildings. The sultan is said to have received the inspiration while lying ill with colic in the Nuri Hospital at Damascus, where he made a vow to establish a similar institution in Cairo in the event of his recovery. The structure, including not only the hospital proper with annexes but also a school and a mosque, was completed in 1284. It comprised special wards for segregat-<sup>1</sup> Abu-al-Fida', vol. iv, pp. 15-16; Maqrizi, tr. Quatremere, vol. ii (pt. 3), pp. 36-40.

\* See above, p. 657. <sup>3</sup> Ar. qubbah\ ibn-Khaldun, vol. v, p. 403. ing various diseases, such as fevers, ophthalmia and dysentery, and was provided with laboratories, a dispensary, baths, kitchens and store-rooms. The chief of its medical staff gave instruction in a properly equipped lecture-room. It had an endowment yielding about a million dirhams annually, employed male and female attendants and was open to the sick of both sexes.<sup>1</sup> So closely associated with the curing of infirmities did this sultan thus become that his robe preserved in his mausoleum has since his time been touched by thousands of dumb children, barren wives and diseased people who believed in its healing virtues.

The only exploit of Qalawun's son and successor al-Malik Ai-Ashrai al-Ashraf (the most noble) Khalil (1290-93) was the conquest of \*Akka in May 1291.<sup>2</sup> Its capture precipitated the fall of the few remaining ports in the possession of the Franks. "A mournful and solitary silence prevailed along the coast which had so long resounded with the WORLD'S DEBATE."<sup>3</sup> In 1302 the Templars who had established a last foothold in the islet of Arwad (Aradus), off the north Syrian coast, were expelled with great slaughter by al-Ashraf's younger brother and successor al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad.

Al-Nasir shares with al-Mutamassik the unique distinction of Mongols having ruled thrice: 1293-4, 1298-1308 and 1309-40. <sup>4</sup> He came <sup>repulsed</sup> first to the throne at the age of nine, and his reign is the longest among the Mamluks and one of the longest in Moslem annals.<sup>5</sup> During his rule the last serious invasions of the Mongols took place under the seventh Il-Khan Ghazan Mahmud, in whose reign Islam was finally recognized as the state religion of the Il-Khanate.<sup>6</sup> The Egyptian army, in size about a third of that of the Mongols, was routed (December 23, 1299) east of Hirns

by the invading army, said to have numbered a hundred thousand,<sup>7</sup> reinforced by Armenians and Georgians. The Mongols continued their victorious march and early in 1300 occupied Damascus, which they spared from pillage, but the rest of northern Syria had another sad experience of plunder and rapine. In March of that year they evacuated the Syrian capital without reducing its citadel and the Egyptians reoccupied all the land. Three years later Ghazan's fresh expedition was checked at

' Maqrizi, tr. Quatremere, vol. ii (pt. 4), p. 146.

Marj al-Suffar, south of Damascus.<sup>1</sup> For the fourth time the Mamluks had beaten the most dangerous enemy Egypt had to contend with since the Moslem conquest. No successor of Ghazan dared risk another encounter.

Soon after the Mongol evacuation of Damascus al-Nasir brought the Druzes of the Lebanon, whose 12,000 bowmen had harassed his army in its retreat a few months before, to a severe reckoning. Other schismatic sects including 'Alids in Kisrawan were also chastised.<sup>2</sup> The Maronites of northern Lebanon were almost crushed. In 1302 and subsequent years he repeatedly devastated the unhappy land of the Armenians.<sup>8</sup> On his Christian and Jewish subjects he re-enforced the outworn restrictions of \* Umar II and al-Mutawakkil.

Al-Nasir's long reign is better known for his achievements in the realm of peace rather than war. The sultan himself was short in stature and lame in one foot, but he had a taste for the beautiful and never wearied of luxurious living and lavishing extravagant adornment on his surroundings. On his return to his residence in the citadel from a trip abroad his retinue spread before him many rugs and costly fabrics for a distance of some four thousand cubits. While on a holy

pilgrimage his table was supplied throughout the Arabian desert with fresh vegetables from a travelling garden carried on forty camels.<sup>4</sup> At his son's nuptial feast 18,000 sugar loaves were consumed, 20,000 beasts were slain and 3000 candles shed their light on the royal palace. His far-famed al-Qasr al-Ablaq <sup>5</sup> (the palace of varied colours) was built after a model at Damascus. A sportsman, hunter and lover of horses, he kept a proper stud book and did not hesitate to pay 30,000 dinars for a horse he fancied.<sup>6</sup>

Egypt at its cultural height

Nor was al-Nasir's extravagance limited to the gratification of his personal tastes. His numerous and beautiful public works, for some of which forced labour was used, mark his reign as the

<sup>1</sup> Abu-al-Fida' (vol. iw, p. 50), a personal friend of al-Nasir and later restored by him to his ancestors' principedom, saw the invading army pass by his native town Hamah.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn-Yahya, pp. 136-7.

<sup>8</sup> Abu-al-Fida , vol. iv, pp. 48, 53\*4, 90-9K ibn-Khaldun, vol. v, pp. 419-20, 4<sup>2</sup>9-30-

<sup>4</sup> Abu-al-Fida', vol. iv, p. 89.

<sup>6</sup> Maqrizi, Khi tat, vol. ii, pp. 209-10. Cf. Mas'udi, Tanbih, p. 258.

- A unique MS. on the horse dedicated to him in gold letters by his secretary al-Husayni is described in Hitti, Faris and \*Abd-al-Malik, Catalog of Arabic Manuscripts, no. 1066



climax of Mamluk culture. He dug a canal, on which a hundred thousand men toiled, connecting Alexandria with the Nile, built (i 311) an aqueduct from that river to the Citadel of Cairo, founded throughout his kingdom about thirty mosques, besides a number of dervish "monasteries", public drinking-fountains (sing, sabif), baths and schools. Makkah was especially favoured by his munificence. His own mosque in the citadel he adorned (1318) with materials from the ruined cathedral of 'Akka. His school, completed in 1304 and named al-Nasiriyah after him, is still standing in Cairo. His mosque and school exemplify the finest achievement in Moslem architecture. Minor arts under him were also cultivated to a higher degree of excellence than ever before, as evidenced by the specimens of bronze and brass work, enamelled glass lamps and illuminated Korans preserved in the Arab Museum and National Library of Cairo.

The heavy expenditure in al-Nasir's long reign burdened the people with exorbitant taxes and contributed to the downfall of the dynasty. The sultan took certain economic measures to alleviate the widespread misery. He encouraged trade with Europe and with the East, ordered a new survey of the land, repealed taxes on salt, chickens, sugar-cane, boats, slaves and horses, suppressed wine-drinking and had bakers who charged excessive prices flogged. The effect, however, was only temporary, palliative. After him, civil wars, famine and plague added their share to the wretchedness of the people. The same "black death" which in 1348-9 devastated Europe lingered in Egypt for about seven years and carried away more of its people than any other plague. The total mortality in the capital, according to the exaggerated estimate of ibn-Iyas,<sup>1</sup> reached 900,000. The sultan and all who could fled. Ghazzah is said to have lost 22,000 inhabitants in one month, while the daily average in Aleppo was five hundred.

The twelve descendants of al-Nasir who followed him in rapid succession during forty-two years (1340-82) were mere figure-heads; their amirs ruled, deposing or murdering the sultan at Bahris pleasure. None of these sultans distinguished himself in any field of endeavour, and the only notable monument is the Mosque of Sultan al-Hasan, son of al-Nasir, completed in 1362 and considered the most beautiful of those built on a cruciform plan.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i, p. 191.

The last Bahri ruler, al-Nasir's great-grandson al-Sâlih Hâjji ibn-Sha'bân (1381-2, 1389-90) was a child whose reign of two years was first interrupted and later terminated by the Circassian Barqûq, who became the founder of a new line, the Burji dynasty.<sup>1</sup> Barqûq began his career as a slave of the sons of al-Ashraf Sha'bân.<sup>2</sup> Before Barqûq another Circassian, Baybars II (1308-9), a slave of Qalâwûn, was one of the three sultans who interrupted al-Nâsir's reign, thus presaging the advent of the new regime.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Khaldûn, vol. v, p. 472; ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. vi, pt. 2, p. I.

\* Consult table above, p. 673.

## CHAPTER XLVIII

### INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC ACTIVITY

MAMLUK Egypt began its history under proud and triumphant rulers who had cleared Syria of the last vestiges of Frankish dominion and had successfully stood between the Mongols and world power. By the end of the period, however, with its military oligarchy, factions among the dominant caste, debased coinage, high taxation, insecurity

of life and property, occasional plague and famine and frequent revolts, both Egypt and its dependency Syria were all but ruined. Especially in the valley of the Nile persistence of outworn ancient superstition and magic, coupled with the triumph of reactionary orthodoxy, hindered scientific advance. Under these conditions no intellectual activity of high order could be expected. In fact the whole Arab world had by the beginning of the thirteenth century lost the intellectual hegemony it had maintained since the eighth.<sup>1</sup> Mental fatigue induced by generations of effort and moral lassitude consequent upon the accumulation of wealth and power were evident everywhere.

In science there were only two branches wherein the Arabs maintained their leadership: astronomy-mathematics, including trigonometry, and medicine, particularly ophthalmology. But in the first discipline the contribution was made mainly by Arabic-writing Persian scholars whose centre of activity was the Il-Khanid observatory and library of Maragahah headed by the illustrious Nasir-al-Din al-Tusi (1201-74). It is interesting to find the Syrian Jacobite Catholicos abu-al-Faraj ibn-al-'Ibri<sup>2</sup> (Barhebraeus, 1226-86), known as an historian and as the last classical author in Syriac literature, lecturing there on Euclid in 1268 and on Ptolemy in 1272-3.

<sup>1</sup> See Sarton, Introduction, vol. ii, especially the introductory chapter. This

general decline of Islamic culture marks the end of the Middle Ages; see above, p. 142.

<sup>2</sup> His *Ta'rikh Mukhtar al-Duwal* was edited by Antun \$alihani (Beirur, 1890).



The Syro-Egyptian kingdom led in medical science. The Medicine elaborate hospital built by Qalâwün may be taken as an index of Egyptian interest in medicine. Its dean abu-al-Hasan 'Ali ibn-al-Nafis, who studied in Damascus where he later died (1288-9), contributed in his *Shark Tashrîh al-Qânün* a clear conception of the pulmonary circulation of the blood, two and a half centuries before the Spanish Servetus, credited with this discovery.<sup>1</sup> To Qalâwün's son al-Nâsir one of the few important Arabic treatises on veterinary medicine known was dedicated under the title *Kamil al-Sina atayn: al-Baytarah w-al-Zartaqah*<sup>1</sup> by his master of the stable, abu-Bakr ibn-al-Mundhir al-Baytâr (f 1340). The Arabic term for veterinary surgeon, baytâr, from Greek hippiatros, suggests that although the Arabs since Bedouin days possessed an extensive empirical knowledge of diseases of camels and horses, yet their more systematic knowledge and improved technique must have come from Byzantine sources. Many of the Mamluks, like Qalâwün and Barqûq, kept magnificent studs. Several works containing Islamic traditions on horses date from this period, including the *Fadi al-Khayl* (the excellence of the horse), by 'Abd-al-Mu'min al-Dimyâti (f 1306), a lecturer at the Man-sürîyah academy of Qalâwün.

Egyptian medicine since Ayyübid days was dominated by Jewish physicians carrying on the glorious tradition of ibn-physicia<sup>M</sup> Maymün. But among neither Moslem nor Jewish physicians do we find creative activity. The Judeo-Egyptian pharmacist al-Kühîn (the priest) al-'Attar (the druggist) composed in Cairo about 1260 an Arabic treatise on pharmacy, *Minhâj al-Dukkân wa-Dustür al-A'yân* (a manual of officinal drugs and a canon for notables), which has not yet outlived its usefulness in the Moslem East.

The period was especially fertile in works half gynecological, half erotic, of the type we now designate “sex books”. Arabic literature, in all ages primarily a male literature, abounds in anecdotes, jokes and remarks which to us today sound obscene. Among the leaders in this field was the Egyptian lapidary al-Tifâshi, who flourished in the middle of the thirteenth century.

<sup>1</sup> Abdul-Karim Chéhadé, Ibn an-Nafis et la découverte de la circulation pulmonaire (Damascus, 1955).

<sup>2</sup> Or al-Nâsiri; tr. M. Perron, Le Naçéri: la perfection des deux arts ou traité complet d'hippologie et d'hippiatrie arabes, 3 vols. (Paris, 1852-60).

We also notice at this time special interest in what al-Razi was the first to term *tibb ruhani* (*filaj nafsani*, spiritual cure), corresponding to our psycho-therapy. An Egyptian pioneer of this school was a Jewish physician of Salah-al-Din, Hibatullah ibn-Jumay' (Jami\*), whose principal work bore the title *al-Irshad li-Masalih al-An fas w-al-Ajsad* (instructions in the interest of souls and bodies). Ibn-Jumay' } noticing a passing funeral, discovered that the “dead” man was still alive from the fact that his feet

Diseases of the eye

Medical history

were standing straight rather than lying flat.<sup>1</sup>

Ophthalmology, one of the disciplines early developed by the Arabs,<sup>2</sup> was practised on a more scientific basis in Syria and Egypt throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries than anywhere else in the world. In the twelfth century the most significant Arabic work on the subject was written by

abu-al-Fadā'il ibn-al-Nāqid (f 1188-9),<sup>3</sup> a Judaeo-Egyptian oculist of Cairo, under the title *Mujarrabdt* (tested remedies). But Syria after that took the lead. Here were composed the only two scholarly works of the period: *al-Kafi fi al-Kuhl* (the sufficient work on collyrium) by Khalifah ibn-abi-al-Mahasin of Aleppo, who flourished about 1256, and *Nūr al- Uyün wa- Jāmt al-Funün* <sup>4</sup> (the light of eyes and compendium of arts) by Salah-al-Dīn ibn-Yūsuf, who practised in Hamah about 1296. Khalifah was so confident of his skill as a surgeon that he did not hesitate to remove a cataract for a one-eyed man. It is noteworthy that the Syrian scholars of the Mamlūk period flourished in inland cities, the coast having been devastated by the Crusades and later by Qalāwūn and his successors, who feared the return of the Franks.

The most distinguished historian of medicine the Arab world produced, Muwaffaq-al-Dīn abu-al-'Abbas Ahmad ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah (1203-70), flourished at Damascus in the early Mamlūk period. Ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah was himself a physician and son of a Damascene oculist. He studied medicine in his birth-

place and Cairo, botanized with the celebrated ibn-al-Baytar and corresponded with the scientist-physician 'Abd-al-Latif al-Baghdādī. His masterpiece was his ' *Uyün al-Anba fi Tabaqdt al-Atibba* <sup>5</sup> (sources of information on the classes of physicians),

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. ii, p. 113.  
363-4.

<sup>2</sup> See above, pp.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn-abi-Usaybi'ah, vol. ii, pp. 115-16.  
Khalfah, vol. vi, p. 393.

<sup>4</sup> Häjji

<sup>5</sup> First edited by " Imru'-al-Qays ibn-al-Tahhän " [August Müller], 2 vols. (Cairo, 1882), then republished with

additional pages, corrections and index by August Müller, 2 vols. (Königsberg, 1884).

an elaborate collection of some four hundred biographies of Arab and Greek medical men. Since most of these physicians were at the same time philosophers, astronomers, physicists and mathematicians, the work is an invaluable source for the history of Arab science in general. It is almost unique in Arabic literature, the nearest approach to it being al-Qifti's *Ikhbdr al- Ulama bi-Akhbar al-Hukama* (acquainting the learned with the story of the philosophers and physicians), which has survived only in a compendium.<sup>6</sup> 'Ali ibn-Yusuf al-Oifti, as the surname indicates, was born in Upper Egypt (1172), but spent a large part of his life in Aleppo, where he acted as vizir to its Ayyubid rulers until his death in 1248.

In the social sciences the main contribution under the Mam-Social luks was in biography. The foremost .biographer Islam produced flourished in Damascus at this time. Shams-al-Din (sun of the faith) Ahmad ibn-Muhammad ibn-Khallikan, a descendant of Yahya ibn-Khalid al-Barmaki, was born in Irbil (Arbela) in 1211. He was educated at Aleppo and Damascus and in 1261 was appointed chief qadi of Syria with his headquarters at Damascus. This position he held, with a seven years' interval, until shortly before his death in 1282. His *Wajayat al-A'yan wa-Anba Abna al-Zamdn* <sup>7</sup> (obituaries of the eminent men and histories of the leading contemporaries) is an accurate and elegant collection of 865 biographies of the most distinguished Moslems in history, the first dictionary of national biography in Arabic. The author took pains to establish the correct spelling of names, fix dates, trace genealogies, verify facts, indicate the main personal traits, sketch the significant events and illustrate by the use of poems and anecdotes. The result is



adjudged by some “the best general biography ever written”.<sup>8</sup>

Not only in biography but in the general field of history the History Mamluk age was moderately rich. Among those often cited in the foregoing pages abu-al-Fida', ibn-Taghri-Birdi, al-Suyuti and al-Maqrizi were Mamluk historians. As for the illustrious ibn-Khaldun (f 1406), who held a professorship and judgeship under Sultan Barquq and headed a delegation under Sultan

Faraj to negotiate peace with Timur at Damascus, his antecedents and literary activity connect him with Spain and al-Maghrib. The historian-geographer abu-al-Fida\* (1273-1332), a descendant of a brother of Salah-al-Din and governor of Hamah under Sultan al-Nasir, epitomized for us in his Mukhtasar Ta rikh al-Bashar <sup>1</sup> (epitome of the history of mankind) the voluminous history of ibn-al-Athir and continued the narrative to his own time. Abu-al-Mahasin ibn-Taghri-Birdi (141 1-69) had as his father a high official in the Mamluk court and as mother a Turkish slave of Barquq. Ibn-Taghri-Birdi <sup>2</sup> himself had close connections with several of the sultans. His major work is al-Nujum al-Zahirah fi Muluk Misr w-al-Qahirah <sup>3</sup> (the brilliant stars regarding the kings of Egypt and Cairo), a history of Egypt from the Arab conquest till 1453. Jalal-al-Din al-Suyuti <sup>4</sup> (1445-1505), like ibn-al-Jawzi, ibn-Hazm and alTabari, was one of the most prolific authors of Islam, but his works show no originality. He is unquestionably the outstanding literary figure of the fifteenth century. His pen traversed the whole field of Arab learning: Koran, tradition, law, philosophy, history, philology, rhetoric, etc.<sup>5</sup> Titles of about five hundred and sixty works of his have come down to us. One of these discusses whether the Prophet wore trousers, whether his turban had a point and whether his parents were in heaven or in hell. He was a

fine calligrapher and very likely claimed authorship of some manuscripts which he merely copied. His best-known works are *al-Itqan fi ' Ulum al-Quran*? on koranic exegesis; *al-Muzhirfi ' Ulum al-Lughah*? a treatise on philology; and *Husn al-Muhadarah fi Akhbar Misr w-al-Qahirah*? a history of Egypt.

The most eminent of Mamluk historians was beyond doubt Taqi-al-Din Ahmad al-Maqrizi (1364-1442). Born in Cairo of

<sup>1</sup> The edition used here is in 4 vols. (Constantinople, 1286). His geography is *Taqwim al-Bulddn*, ed. J. T. Reinaud and de Slane (Paris, 1840); tr. Reinaud,

2 vols. (Paris, 1848).

' Vol. vi, pt. 2, p. 430, l. 6; p. 552, l. 22; p. 743, l. 19.

' Ed. F. G. Juynboll and Matthes, 2 vols. (Leyden, 1855-61), ed. William Popper,

3 vols. (Berkeley, 1909-29).

<sup>4</sup> Born in Asyu{ (Assiut), Upper Egypt.

<sup>6</sup> Ci. list in his *Nazm al-' lqyan fi A'ydn al-A'yan*, ed. Hitti (New York, 1927), pp. kh,d.

<sup>6</sup> Several Cairo editions, none critical.

' The edition used here is in 2 vols. (Cairo, 1325).

• The edition used here is in 2 vols. (Cairo, 1321).

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Ba'labakkan ancestry, al-Maqrizi held several high offices as deputy qadi and as teacher in his native town and in Damascus. His title to fame rests on his *al-Mawa iz w-al-Ftibar fi Dhikr al-Khitat w-al-Athdr*<sup>1</sup> (sermons and learning by example on an account of the new settlements and remains) devoted to Egyptian topography, history and antiquities. His contemporary al-Sakhawi's<sup>2</sup> charge of wholesale plagiarism in the production of this work is well founded; but the fault was common in those days.

Two Egyptian encyclopaedists often quoted in these pages are isiamics Ahmad al-Nuwayri (f 1332), author of *Nihayat al-Arab fi^^^ Funun al-Adab?* and Ahmad al-Qalqashandi (f 1418), whose *Subh al-A'shat* intended as a manual for those who hold secretarial offices in the government, is.replete with historical and geographical facts mainly on Egypt and Syria. The remaining authors of this period busied themselves with Islamic studies and linguistics. An exceptional work of major importance is a compendium of theoretical and practical navigation by Ahmad ibn-Majid<sup>5</sup> of Najdi ancestry, who, it is claimed, in 1498 piloted Vasco da Gama from Africa to India.

In theology reference should be made to the puritan, conservative Taqi-al-Din Ahmad ibn-Taymiyah<sup>6</sup> (1263-1328), who was born in Harran and flourished in Damascus. He bowed to no authority other than the Koran, tradition and the practice of the community and lifted his voice high against innovation, saintworship, vows and pilgrimage to shrines. A follower of ibn-Hanbal, his principles were later adopted by the Wahhabis of Najd. Eminent in tradition was ibn-Hajar al-'Asqalani<sup>7</sup> (1372— t 49), chief qadi of Cairo, who knew the Koran by heart when only nine years old. In poetry perhaps the only name worthy of citation is that of Sharaf-al-Din Muhammad al-Busiri<sup>8</sup> (1213-ca. 1296), of

Berber extraction, who composed the famous ode entitled al-Burdah (the Prophet's mantle) in memory of his miraculous cure from a paralytic stroke by a vision of the Prophet

<sup>1</sup> The edition used here is in 2 vols. (Bulaq, 1270).

<sup>2</sup> Al-Tibr al-Alasbuk fi Dhayl al-Sttluk (Bulaq, 1896), p. 22.

<sup>3</sup> 9 vols. (Cairo, 1923-33), incomplete. <sup>4</sup> 14 vols. (Cairo, 1913-22).

<sup>5</sup> Kitab al-Faivaidfi Ustil al-Bahrw-al-Qawa id, ed. G. Ferrand (Paris, 1921-3).

<sup>6</sup> Of the 500 works ascribed to him some sixty-four survive. Consult Kutubi,

vol. i, pp. 48-9.

<sup>7</sup> His al-Ifabah fi Tamyiz al-Sahabah, 8 vols. (Cairo, 1323-7), was cited above.

<sup>8</sup> Born in Abuşir.

•Storytelling

Shadow play

casting his mantle over him. No other Arabic ode has attained the popularity of al-Burdah. Over ninety commentaries on it have been composed in Arabic, Turkish, Persian and Berber and it has been translated into Persian, Turkish, German, French, English<sup>1</sup> and Italian. Its verses are still recited as charms and the Druzes repeat them to the present day at burials.

We should here recall that the two romances (sing. sir a Ji) of 'Antar and Baybars, that have not ceased to entertain large audiences in the cafés of the Moslem Orient, took their present form during the Mamlük period. Likewise the less popular Alf Laylah, which through its translations has assumed a place among the immortal pieces of international literature, did not take its final form until this time. Ardent votaries of sports, tournaments, archery, athletics, the chase and horsemanship, the Mamlüks, especially those of the Crusading period, provided the ideal type of hero whose exploits legend never tired of embroidering. The J dr is who figures in the Nights portrays the Mamlük knight as he flourished in this, rather than in the earlier 'Abbasid period. Likewise the folk-manners and customs are drawn from the society which the narrator saw around him in the Cairo of the Mamlüks.

In the late thirteenth century a highly developed specimen of shadow-play literature makes its appearance under the title *Tayf al-Khay di fi Mdrifat Khay al al-Zill*<sup>2</sup> (phantoms of the imagination on the knowledge of shadow play) by Muhammad ibn-Dániyál al-Khuzá'i al-Mawsili (j\* ca. 1310). The author was a Moslem physician, possibly of Jewish or Christian origin, who flourished under Baybars, and his production is the only extant specimen of dramatic poetry from medieval Islam. Shadow plays were invented probably in the Far East. The Moslems got them from India or Persia. At the end of the ninth century Arab story-tellers began to introduce national types into their tales and strive for comic effect. By the twelfth century they had developed puppet plays. In Spain a reference to khaydl al-zill was made in a figure of speech by ibn-Hazm in the eleventh century.<sup>3</sup> From Western Asia and Egypt<sup>4</sup> these plays

<sup>1</sup> J. W. Redhouse. "The 'Burdah'", in W. A. Clouston, *Arabian Poetry for English Readers* (Glasgow, 1881), pp.

319-41.

<sup>2</sup> Ed. in part by Georg Jacob, 3 vols. (Erlangen, 1910-12).  
See Kutubi, vol. ii,

p 237. <sup>3</sup> Al-Akhlaq w-al-Siyar, ed. Maljmaşani  
(Cairo), p. 28

<sup>4</sup> See ibn Iyās, vol. ii, p. 33.

passed to Constantinople, where the principal character was styled Qaragôz (black-eyed), and thence to the rest of eastern Europe. Some of the material of the Turkish puppet theatre shows evidence of having been borrowed from the Nights. The Turkish Qaragôz may have influenced the type of modern actors represented by Charlie Chaplin.

The most pleasant surprise of the Mamlük period, dominated Archi-by a régime of blood and iron, is the extraordinary architectural<sup>tectur0</sup> and artistic productiveness of a scale and quality that find no parallel in Egyptian history since Ptolemaic and Pharaonic days. In such mosques, schools and mausoleums erected by Qalâwün, al-Nâsir and al-Hasan, Moslem architecture reached its most florid expression. In the Burji period the monuments of Barqûq, Qâ'it-bây and al-Ghawri are equally remarkable. Since then no edifice of any importance has made its appearance in Arab lands.

The Mamlük school of architecture, whose origins go back to Nurid and Ayyübid models,<sup>1</sup> received fresh Syro-Mesopotamian influences when in the thirteenth century Egypt became a haven of refuge for Moslem artists and artisans who fled from al-Mawsil, Baghdad and Damascus before the Mongol invasions. With the ending of the Crusades the obstruction to uninterrupted access to the stone-building territory to the north was removed and brick

was abandoned in minaret construction in favour of stone. The cruciform plan of school-mosque structure was developed to its perfection. Domes were constructed that defy rivalry for lightness, beauty of outline and richness of decoration. Striped masonry and decoration (ablaaq)? obtained by using stones of different colours in alternate courses, of Roman or Byzantine origin, became a feature. The period was also noteworthy for the development of the stalactite pendentive as well as for the two other familiar features of Moslem decoration: geometrical arabesques and Kufic lettering. Throughout all the Moslem ages animal forms were less freely used in Egypt and Syria than in Spain and Persia. Happily the finest examples of Mamlük structures have survived and still form one of the main attractions for tourists and students alike.

Almost all branches of applied art maintained intimate connection with building, especially of the religious type. Extant

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 660.

\* Cf. above, p.

680. specimens of ornate bronze mosque doors, bronze chandeliers in delicate arabesque designs, gold gem-studded Koran-cases, exquisite mosaics in niches and intricate woodwork in pulpits and lecterns testify to their flourishing state.<sup>1</sup> Most of the massive mosque doors are faced with Damascene metal-work. Mosque lamps and coloured windows were made of the finest stained glass with floral designs and Arabic inscriptions. The inner walls of mosques were embellished with the finest decorative glazed tiles. In the minarets of the Mosque of al-Nasir in the citadel (1318) are found the earliest Mamlük examples of faïence architecturally employed. Under the Burjis inlay became especially popular as the doors and pulpits of the Qâ'it-bây's Mosque indicate. In mosaics, ivory carving and

enamelling the Copts had been proficient since pre-Islamic times.

## Illumination

### Luxurious living

Among these minor arts none is more individual and characteristic than the illumination of manuscripts, reserved almost exclusively to the “word of Allah”. So infinite were the pains taken and such was the skill necessary for the arrangement of colours and the elaboration of decorative elements, that even the best of Korans do not ordinarily have more than two or three pages fully illuminated. Here again the finest collection of illuminated Korans belonged to the Mamluk sultans and has been recovered by the National Library at Cairo from the various city mosques.

The delicate refinements of art were not lavished on sacred objects only. Various articles of luxury—cups, bowls, trays, incense burners, testifying to the fidelity of the picture of high life depicted by contemporary chroniclers—have come down to us. Royal princesses bedecked themselves with anklets, ear-rings, necklaces, bracelets and amulets not unlike those still used by modern Egyptians. Mamluk banquets were followed by entertainments featuring the dancers, jugglers and shadow plays. The court officers included such high personages as master of the household (ustâdâr), armour bearer {amir silah\ master of horse (amir âkhür) and cupbearer (sâqi khâss)\* Barqüq established between Damascus and Cairo stations to facilitate the transport of ice to Egypt by camel.<sup>3</sup> Of the Burji Mamluks Jaqmaq (1438

<sup>1</sup> For illustration consult Gaston Wiet, Catalogue général du musée arabe du Caire; lampes et bouteilles en verre émaillé



(Cairo, 1929).

<sup>2</sup> Subh, vol. iv, pp. 18 seq.\ Maqrizi, Khifat, vol. ii, p. 222; Zâhiri, pp. 114 seq.\ Gaudefroy-Demombynes, La Syrie à l'époque des Mamlouks (Paris, 1923), pp. L seq.

<sup>8</sup> Zâhiri, pp. 117-18; 'U.mari, pp. 184 seq.

CH. XLVIII INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC ACTIVITY 693 1453) expended 3,000,000 dinars in three years on slaves and bounties.<sup>1</sup>

With the Ottoman conquest of Syria and Egypt almost all Mamluk industrial arts began to decay. A number of architects, craftsmen and carpenters were sent by Sultan Salim to Constantinople. In one branch only, glazed tile, craftsmanship after the Turkish conquest surpassed anything that had been produced before, as the collection of Damascus tiles in the South Kensington Museum proves. The inlaid trays, bowls, candlesticks, flowerpots and other varieties of brass-work manufactured today in Damascus follow mostly Mamluk patterns.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. vii, p. 246.

## CHAPTER XLIX

### THE END OF MAMLUK RULE

UNLIKE the Turkish Bahris, the Burji Mamluks were all Circassian with the exception of two: Khushqadam (1461—7) and Timurbugha (1467), who were Greek.<sup>1</sup> The Burjis rejected even more emphatically than the Bahris the principle of hereditary succession; the sultan was only *primus inter pares* with the real power in the hands of a military oligarchy. Of the twenty-three Burji sultans, whose

reigns covered 134 years (1382—1517), nine ruled an aggregate of 124 years. These nine are Barquq, Faraj, al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh, Barsbay, Jaqmaq, Inal, Khushqadam, Qa'it-bay and Qansawh al-Ghawri.<sup>2</sup> The remaining fourteen were almost all of no consequence, and in one year, 1421, three different sultans were installed. Qa'it-bay's rule (1468-95) was not only the longest but in some respects the most important and successful.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. vii, pp. 685, 842, 847.

\* His name is thus spelled in a Koran written for him (Moritz, *Paleography* t

vol. i, pl. 83); the usual form is Qänṣüh al-Ghüri.

<sup>8</sup> List of Burji Mamlüks:

\Continued at foot of next page

The new regime continued the intrigue, assassination and Specimen» rapine of its predecessor. In fact it is one of the darkest in Syro-Egyptian annals. Several of the sultans were treacherous and bloodthirsty, some were inefficient or even degenerate, most of them were uncultured. Al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh (1412-21), a drunkard who had been bought by Barquq from a Circassian dealer, committed some of the worst excesses.<sup>1</sup> Barquq was the only one of the lot who had a Moslem father.<sup>2</sup> Barsbay (1422-38), originally enrolled among the slaves of Barquq, was not familiar with Arabic. He had his two physicians beheaded because they could give him no relief from a fatal malady. Inal (1453-60), another slave of Barquq, could neither read nor write. His contemporary ibn-Taghri-Birdi<sup>3</sup> did not suppose that Inal could recite the first surah of the Koran without a mistake. His name on the official documents he traced over the

writing of a secretary. Nor was he above suspicion in the matter of paederasty, with which Baybars among other Mamluks was charged. The g hitman institution of ʿAbbasid notoriety<sup>4</sup> was again flourishing under the Mamluks. His third successor Yalbay (1467) was not only illiterate but insane.<sup>5</sup> Qa'it-bay (1468-95), who was purchased by Barsbay for fifty dinars and manumitted by Jaqmaq, had the alchemist \*Ali ibn-al-Marshushi blinded and deprived of his tongue for his failure to turn dross into gold. He levied a burdensome tax on the sale of corn which greatly added to the misery of the masses.

Not only the sultans but the whole oligarchy were more or less corrupt. The numerous Mamluk amirs and slaves organized themselves into various factions originating in the bodyguards of Barquq, Faraj, Shaykh and Barsbay and were usually at enmity with one another. Each faction was animated solely by the desire of grasping all possible wealth and influence.

The evil economic situation of the kingdom was aggravated Desperate by the selfish policy of the sultans. Barsbay forbade the importa-

18. Al-Ashraf Sayf-al-Din Qä'it-bäy . . . . 1468

22. Al-Ashraf Qänşawh al-Ghawri . . . . 1500

23. Al-Ashraf Tünaän-bäy ..... 1516-17

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. vi, pp. 322 seq.  
vol. ii, p. 88.

\* Suyüfi, Husn,

' Vol. vii, p. 559.  
485.

<sup>4</sup> See above, pp. 341,

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. vii, pp. 831, 840, 841.

tion of spices from India, including the much desired pepper, and before the price rose he cornered the existing supply and sold it to his subjects at a great profit. He also monopolized the manufacture of sugar and went so far as to prohibit the planting of sugar-cane for a period in order to realize excessive profits for himself. In his reign another of the periodic plagues visited Egypt and neighbouring countries, and sugar was in special demand as a remedy against the disease. Though not quite as devastating as the "black death", this epidemic is said to have carried away in the capital alone 300,000 victims within three months. Considering the visitation a punishment for the sins of his people, the sultan prohibited females from going outdoors<sup>1</sup> and sought to make atonement by fresh exactions from Christians and Jews. He also deprived non-Moslems of their offices in the government and enforced on them the dress regulations. The same policy against Christians and Jews was pursued by several of his predecessors and by Jaqmaq and Khushqadam.<sup>2</sup> Many of Inal's predecessors struck debased silver money and frequently changed the mint value of the precious metals.

Exactions were not limited to non-Moslems. In the absence of a regulated system of taxation, the only way these sultans could raise enough money for their campaigns, extravagant courts and monumental buildings was by extortion from their subjects and from government officials who had enriched themselves at the expense of the public. Marauding Bedouins in the Delta and the desert to the east repeatedly fell on the settled fallakin of the narrow agricultural valley and ravaged the land. Locusts, like epidemics, made their periodic visitation. Famine became almost chronic in the land and was intensified in the years of plague and drought caused by low water in the Nile.

In the reigns of Faraj and Shaykh starvation was especially widespread. It is estimated that in the course of the Mamluk period the population of Syria and Egypt was reduced by two-thirds.<sup>3</sup>

### Indian trade lost

Towards the end of the period certain international factors began to contribute to the poverty and misery of the land. In 1498 the Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama found his way round the Cape of Good Hope. This was an event of vital importance in the history of the Syro-Egyptian kingdom. Not only did

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. vi, p. 760.      <sup>2</sup> Ibid. vol. vii, pp. 186, 721-2.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. vi, pt. 2, p. 273.

attacks from Portuguese and other European fleets become frequent on Moslem ships in the Red Sea and Indian waters but gradually most of the traffic in spices and other tropical products of India and Arabia was diverted from Syrian and Egyptian ports. Thereby one of the main sources of national income was for ever destroyed. The fleet of al-Ghawri had several engagements with Portuguese ships along the coast of Arabia. His threat to the pope, that unless the Portuguese were checked he would destroy the Christian holy places, was of no avail. In 1500 the Portuguese established themselves in Calicut on the west coast of India, and thirteen years later their general, Alfonso d'Albuquerque (from Ar. abu-al-qurq [?], sandal maker), bombarded 'Adan (Aden).

The only redeeming feature in this entire period was the Monu-erection—as if to atone for the shortcomings of the

rulers—of men, tal

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buildings which have stood out to the present day as impressive examples of Moslem architecture. Such were the Mosque and Mausoleum of Barqûq, the Mosque of Qâ'it-bây and the Mosque of al-Ghawri. The memorial Mosque of Qâ'it-bây consists of a mosque proper, a tomb, a fountain and a school. Besides its symphony in two colours, red and white, the dome is decorated with a charming network of conventionalized foliage and rosettes. This and other Mamluk buildings maintain the traditions of vigour and virile elegance established by the Ayyûbid school of Syria.

The Burjis also continued the earlier practice of applying elaborate arabesque ornament to the minor arts. In these industries, as in architecture, Qâ'it-bây's reign was the richest since the days of al-Nâsir ibn-Qalâwûn.

In their foreign relations the Burjis were even less happy than Foreign in their domestic affairs. Before the close of the reign of their <sup>relations</sup> first sultan the spectre of a new Mongolian invader, Timur, a worthy successor of Hülâgu and Chingiz, began to loom on the northern horizon. Syria itself was convulsed throughout the whole period by revolts headed by its local governors, some of whom were instigated by the Mongols. Besides Timür another and what proved a more deadly enemy began now to threaten the kingdom, the Ottomans of Anatolia.

The only bright spot in this dark period was the conquest of Cyprus Cyprus in 1424-1426 by Barsbây. The object of the Egyptian <sup>conquercd</sup>

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[1](#)

Abu-al-Fida', vol. iii, p. 188; ibn-Khaldun, vol. v, p. 373.

[2](#)

<sup>4</sup> Colloquially referred to as Bahr, sea.

[3](#)

- Ibn-Khaldun, vol. v, p. 369, and Suyuti, Husn, vol. ii, p. 80, designate them as

[4](#)

the "Turkish dynasty".

[5](#)

' See above, p. 466.

[6](#)

Ed. Julius Lippert (Leipzig, 1903).

[7](#)

<sup>1</sup> Several editions. The one used here is in 3 vols. (Cairo, 1299), n. de Slone,

4 vols. (Paris, 1843-71).

[8](#)

Nicholson, Literary History, p. 452.



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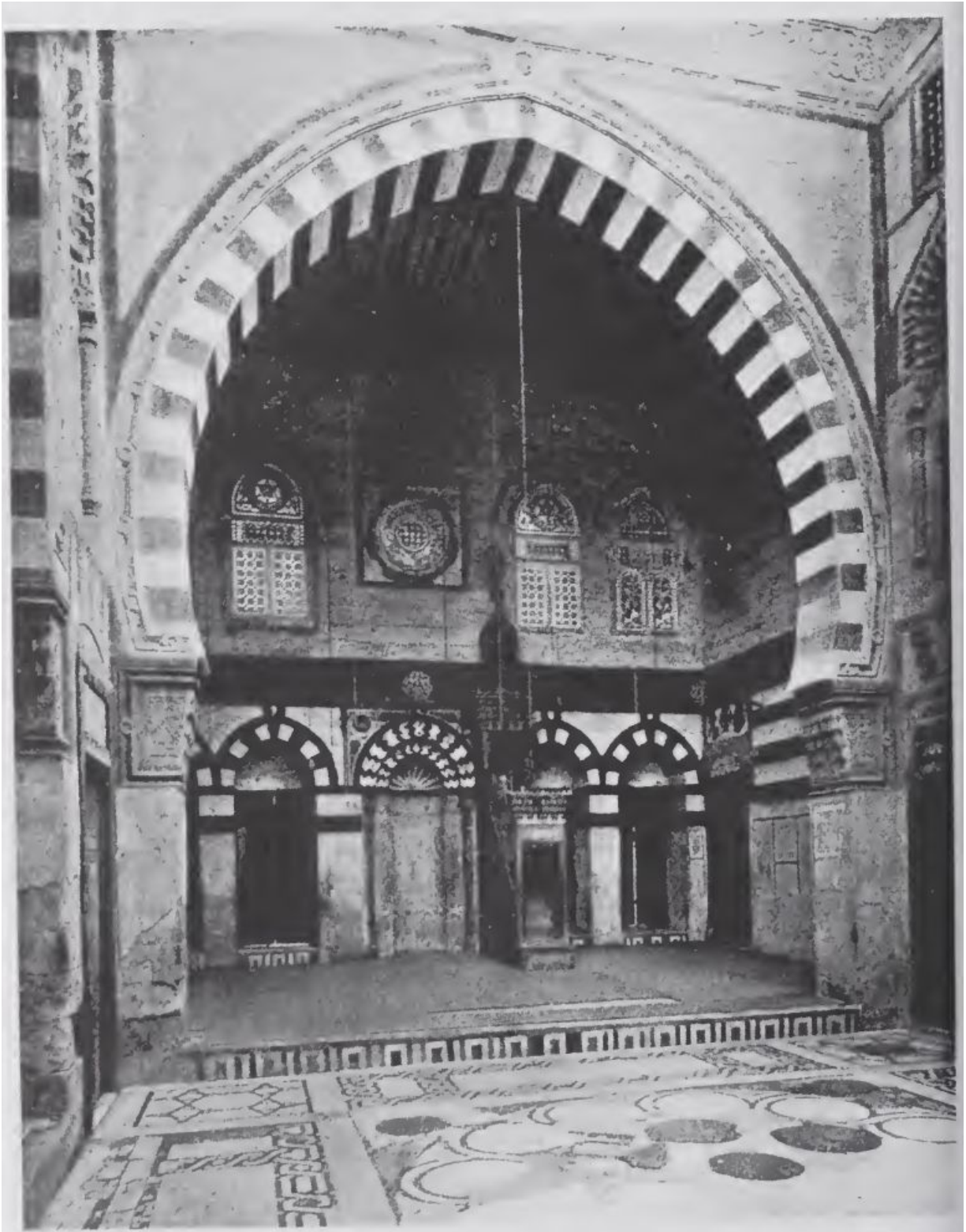
From Martin S. Briggs, "Muhammadan Architecture in Egypt and Palestine" {Clarendon Press'}

#### THE MADRASAH OF QÂTT-BÂÏ, CAIRO (EXTERIOR)

expedition to this Mediterranean island was to deprive the corsairs, who had repeatedly ravaged Syrian ports, of a base. The island had been in the hands of Franks, first the Templars and then the house of Lusignan, ever since Richard I occupied it in 1191. It was a powerful ally of the Crusaders and later a permanent menace to the Mamluk kingdom. In 1270 Baybars made the first attempt to retaliate for the frequent raids by Cypriotes, but his fleet was wrecked off Limassol. Now Barsbay's formidable forces, after seizing Limassol, advanced to Larnaca and, having defeated the Lusignan army, took King Janus prisoner. Heavily fettered, the king and over a thousand captives were paraded through the streets of Cairo and then brought before the sultan. After kissing the ground<sup>1</sup> at the sultan's feet the king fainted and was borne into the citadel. Ibn-Taghri-Birdi,<sup>2</sup> who later had an interview with the exiled king, gives us an eye-witness's account. Later, through the intervention of the Venetian consul, Janus was returned to his throne on the payment of a ransom of 200,000 dinars and the pledge of a yearly tribute of 20,000. Barsbay also concluded a treaty of peace with Rhodes, whose Knights of St. John had often collaborated with the Cypriotes in their attacks on the Egyptian coast. Cyprus was the sole acquisition throughout the Burji age, but did not begin to compensate for the many losses suffered.

Timur Lang, commonly corrupted into Tamerlane, was born in Timur 1336 in Transoxiana. One of his ancestors was vizir

to Chingiz' son, but the family claimed descent from Chingiz himself. His satirical biographer ibn-'Arab-Shah,<sup>3</sup> however, cites the claim that Timur was the son of a shoemaker and lived at first by brigandage, and that the epithet Lang (lame) he received as a result of a wound inflicted on him while stealing sheep. In 1380 Timur at the head of his Tartar hordes initiated a long series of campaigns which gained for him Afghanistan, Persia, Faris and Kurdistan. In 1393 he captured Baghdad and in that and the following year overran Mesopotamia. In Takrit, the birthplace of Salah-al-Din, he erected a pyramid with the skulls of his



From Martin .S'. Friyys, "Muhammadan Architecture in Egypt and Palestine" (Clarendon Press)

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# THE MADRASAH OF QÀTT-BÀY, CAIRO (INTERIOR)

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victims. In 1395 he invaded the Qipchaq territory and occupied Moscow for over a year. Three years later he ravaged northern India and massacred 80,000 of the inhabitants of Delhi. It was the envoys of Timur whom Barquq towards the close of his reign ventured to execute, although they came on a friendly mission.

Like a cyclone Timur swept over northern Syria in 1400. For three days Aleppo was given over to plunder. The heads of over twenty thousand of its Moslem inhabitants were built into mounds ten cubits high by twenty in circumference, with all the faces on the outside.<sup>4</sup> The city's priceless schools and mosques of the Nurid and Ayyubid ages were destroyed, never to be rebuilt. Hamah, Hirns and Ba'labakk fell in turn. The advance force of the Egyptian army under Sultan Faraj were routed and Damascus captured (February, 1401). While the city was sacked the fire broke out. The invader—a nominal Moslem with Shi'ite proclivities—extorted a religious opinion from its ulema approving his conduct. Of the Umayyad Mosque nothing was left but the walls.<sup>5</sup> Of the Damascene scholars, skilled labourers and artisans the ablest were carried away by Timur to his capital,

Samarqand, there to implant Islamic sciences and to introduce certain industrial arts which have since been lost to the Syrian capital. Ibn-Taghri-Birdi,<sup>6</sup> whose father was chief armour bearer of Faraj, has left us a graphic description of this campaign. Ibn-Khaldun accompanied Faraj from Cairo and headed the Damascene mission which negotiated peace with Timur. From Damascus the wild conqueror rushed back to Baghdad to avenge the deaths of certain of his officers and dotted the city with a hundred and twenty towers built of the heads of the dead.

During the next two years Timur invaded Asia Minor, crushed the Ottoman army at Ankara (July 21, 1402) and took Sultan Bayazid I prisoner. He captured the former capital Brusa and Smyrna. The distinguished captive was kept in chains during the night and made to travel in a litter surrounded by a grille (qafas) carried on two horses. The word qafas, supported by a misunderstood passage in ibn-'Arab-Shah,<sup>4</sup> gave rise to the legend that Bayazid was shut up in an iron cage. Timur's death

Timûrids

Ottoman Turks

in 1404, in the course of a campaign against China, came as a relief to the Egyptian Mamluks. His tomb can still be seen in Samarqand.

His son and successor, Shah-Rukh (1404-47), held an angry correspondence with Barsbay demanding the right, in fulfilment of a vow, of furnishing the Ka'bah with its precious curtain—a privilege maintained by the Mamluks as the leading sovereigns of Islam. After holding a consultation with his qadis of the four rites, Barsbay deftly replied that Shah would be absolved of his vow if he would spend the

money on the poor of Makkah.<sup>1</sup> Shah sent another envoy with a courtly robe, commanding that the Mamluk sultan should receive investiture in it as his vassal, but Barsbay tore up the robe and had the envoy flogged and ignominiously ducked head downward in a pool. It was a cold day in winter and the scene was witnessed by ibn-Taghri-Birdi.<sup>2</sup> After Shah the Timurids exhausted themselves in internal struggles which encouraged the rise of the Safawids and the reconstitution of the Ottoman empire.

Reference has been made<sup>8</sup> to the ultimate origin of the Ottoman Turks in Mongolia, their admixture with Iranian tribes in Central Asia and their advent into Asia Minor, where they gradually superseded and absorbed their Saljuq cousins, and in the first years of the fourteenth century established a kingdom destined to supersede the Byzantine empire as well as the Arab caliphate. Bayazid I (1389-1402) was the great-grandson of 'Uthman (1299-1326), the eponymous founder of the dynasty. Under him the Asiatic part of the kingdom, extending from the northern frontier of Syria to the Danube, was almost all lost. In the following ten years, however, it was largely recovered from Europe as a base by Bayazid's son Muhammad I (1402-21). The Ottoman problem began to confront seriously the Egyptian sultans at the time of Muhammad I's great-grandson, Bayazid II (1481-1512), a contemporary of Qa'it-bay. Rivalry between the two powers found its first expression in repeated conflicts among their vassals on the borders of Asia Minor and Syria. Qa'it-bay invited fresh trouble in 1481 by harbouring the fugitive Jem, brother of Bayazid II and pretender to the throne; and when Jem later was taken to Rome the Mamluk sultan negotiated with

<sup>1</sup> Ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. vi. pt. 2. pp. 722. 725

<sup>2</sup> Vol. vi, pt. 2, p. 743.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 475, 478, 489. the pope with a view to his return to Egypt. But the immediate cause of the final breach was the secret promise of support made by Qansawh al-Ghawri to the arch-enemy of the Turks, the Persian Shah Isma'il (1502-24).

Isma'il was the founder of the Safawid dynasty (1502-1736), Safawids the most glorious of the native dynasties of Moslem Persia. Its name is derived from the pious Shaykh Safi-al-Din (the pure one of the faith), from whom Isma'il was sixth in descent. The family traced its origin to the seventh imam, Musa al-Kazim, and became ardent in its Shi'ism. Its founder on his accession declared Shi'ism, more particularly the doctrine of the Twelvers, the state religion of Persia, which has ever since remained true to this faith. His collision with the Sunnite Ottoman Salim I (1512-20), son of Bayazid II, took place in August, 1514, at Chaldiran, north of Lake Urmiyah, where his cavalry gave way before the Janissaries'<sup>1</sup> superior artillery. The Turks then occupied Isma'il's capital Tibriz, Mesopotamia and part of Armenia (1515).

In the spring of the following year Qansawh proceeded to The Aleppo under the pretext of acting as intermediary between the two contestants, but in reality to aid his Persian ally. In order to Marj give his mission a peaceful appearance, he brought in his train <sup>Dabiq</sup> his puppet Caliph al-Mutawakkil and the chief qadis of his realm. But Salim would not be deceived; he was kept informed of the intentions of the Mamluk sultan through a system of spies. When Qansawh's envoy arrived at Salim's camp his beard was shaved—a grave insult—and he was sent back on a mule with a declaration of war. His attendants were put to death. There was no way of averting the impending catastrophe. Though about seventy-five years old, Qansawh, once a slave of Qa'it-bay, was still vigorous. Throughout his reign he had proved himself a man of no mean ability. But he could not depend

upon the loyalty of his north Syrian governors, or upon the co-operation of several of his Egyptian amirs.

The two armies met on August 24, 1516, at Marj Dabiq, a day's journey north of Aleppo. Qansawh entrusted the command of the left wing to Kha'ir Bey, the treacherous governor of Aleppo, who at the first charge deserted with his troops. Soon afterward the aged Mamluk fell from his horse, stricken with

<sup>1</sup> Tur.yeni-cheri, new troops, name given to the regular infantry recruited mainly from young captured Christians, and largely responsible for the Ottoman conquests.

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LAST OF THE MEDIEVAL MOSLEM STATES part v apoplexy.<sup>7</sup>  
The Ottoman victory was complete. The Turkish army was better equipped with the new arms artillery, muskets and other long-range weapons—which the Mamluk army, committed to cavalry and comprising Bedouin and Negro contingents, disdained. The Turks had for some time been using powder, but the Syro-Egyptians clung to the antiquated theory that personal valour is the decisive factor in combat. Salim entered Aleppo in triumph and was welcomed as a deliverer from Mamluk excesses. The caliph he treated kindly. In the citadel of the city he found immense treasures, estimated in millions of dinars, which the sultan and princes had deposited there. In mid-October he advanced upon Damascus, whose leading men went over to him or fled to Egypt. Syria passed into Ottoman hands, in which it continued for the next four centuries.

Egypt conquered



From Syria the Ottoman conqueror swept south into Egypt. Here Tuman-bay, a slave of Qansawh, had become sultan. The two armies met on January 22, 1517, outside Cairo, where Tuman at first battled valiantly. But the corrupt state of his army, the jealousies among his amirs, the lack of funds and adequate firearms and the superiority of the Ottoman artillery were sure to tell as the struggle dragged on. Salim, supported by Bedouin contingents, finally entered and plundered the city, slaughtering all the Mamluks who fell into his hands. His guns on the right bank of the Nile were brought into action against the remnant of the army. Tuman-bay fled to a Bedouin chief, but was later betrayed and, strange as it may seem, hanged (April 14) at one of Cairo's main gates.<sup>8</sup> The Mamluk sultanate was for ever crushed. Cairo, the centre of Eastern Islam since Salah-al-Din's time, passed away as an imperial city and became a provincial town, Makkah and al-Madinah automatically became a part of the Ottoman empire. The Egyptian preachers who led the Friday public services invoked Allah's blessing on Salim in the following words:

O Lord! uphold the sultan, son of the sultan, ruler over both lands and the two seas, conqueror of both hosts, monarch of the two Iraqs, minister of the two Holy Cities, the victorious king Salim Shah. Grant him, O Lord, Thy precious aid; enable him to win glorious victories, O Ruler of this world and the next, Lord of the universe.<sup>3</sup>

After lingering until the autumn in the valley of the Nile, where he visited the pyramids, Alexandria and other places of <sup>cali</sup> <sup>o</sup> <sup>™</sup> <sup>at</sup> interest, the great conqueror returned to Constantinople, the Ottoman capital since 1453, carrying with him the caliph. Charged later with misappropriating trust funds, al-Mutawakkil was held prisoner until allowed to retire to Cairo by Salim's son and successor, Sulayman the Magnificent. There he died in 1543 • His death closed the

last chapter in the history of the mock 'Abbasid caliphate. Whether, as is alleged without sufficient warrant, he made a transfer of his office to the Ottoman sultan or not,<sup>1</sup> the fact remains that the Turkish ruler in Constantinople gradually absorbed the caliphal privileges and ultimately the title itself. Although some of Salim's successors styled themselves caliphs and were so addressed, their use of the title was complimentary and unrecognized outside their own territories. The first known diplomatic document which applies the term caliph to the Ottoman sultan and recognizes his religious authority over Moslems outside of Turkey is the Russo-Turkish treaty of Kuchuk Kaynarji, signed in 1774.

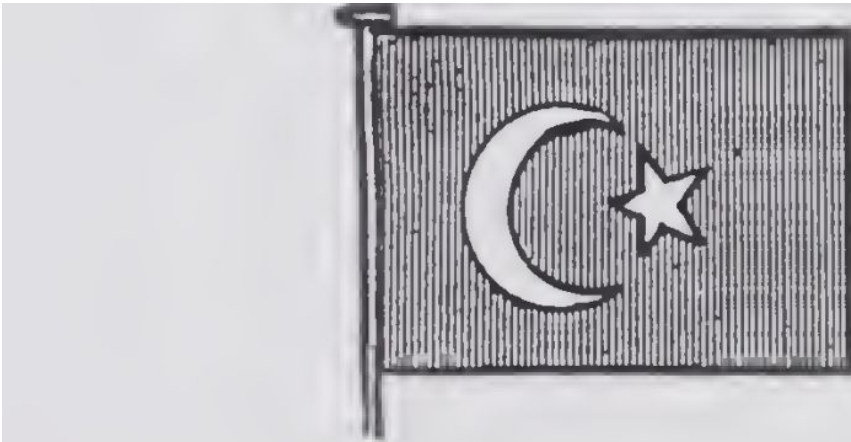
The sultan-caliph of Constantinople became the most powerful potentate in Islam, an heir not only to the caliphs of Baghdad but also to the emperors of Byzantium.<sup>2</sup> With the destruction of Mamluk power and the establishment of the Turks on the Bosphorus the focus of Islamic power shifted westward. In fact, by this time the centre of world civilization had moved to the West. The discovery of America and of the Cape of Good Hope transferred the world's trade to new routes, and the entire realm of the eastern Mediterranean began to sink into the background. Herewith the history of the Arab caliphate and the Moslem dynasties that arose in medieval times on the ruins of the Arab empire comes to an end, and the modern history of the Ottoman caliphate-empire begins.

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 489, 677.

\* On the abolition of the Ottoman caliphate see above, pp. 139, 184.

## PART VI

## OTTOMAN RULE AND INDEPENDENCE



THE FLAG OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

### CHAPTER I

#### THE ARAB LANDS AS TURKISH PROVINCES

For about two-thirds of a century after its establishment about 1300 in Anatolia at the expense of the Byzantine empire and on the ruins of the Saljūq kingdom, the Ottoman state was but a frontier amirate.<sup>1</sup> The state was on a war footing and at times precarious. Its capital, beginning with 1326, was Brusa (Bursa). By 1366 the amirate had become more stable, gained a firm foothold on the European mainland and developed into a kingdom with Adrianople (Edirne) as capital.<sup>2</sup> The conquest in 1453 of Constantinople by Muhammad II the Conqueror (1451-81) formally ushered in a new era, that of the empire. The new giant

<sup>1</sup> Genealogical table of the early Ottoman rulers:

1. 'Uthmân I (1299)

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2. Ürkân (1320)

3. Murâd I (1359)

3. Murâd I (1359)

4. Bâyezîd I (1389-1401) installed himself astride the Bosphorus with one foot in Asia and the other in Europe. His expanding domain made him heir not only to Byzantium but also, through the destruction of the Mamluk power,<sup>1</sup> to the successor states of the Arab caliphate. The inheritance of lands from both East and West had its counterpart in the inheritance of ideas, and the combined heritage is perhaps the most pregnant fact in the history of Ottoman Turkey.

Sulaymân (claimant)

(1403-10)

5. Muhammad I (1403)

(sole ruler 1413)

6. Murâd II (1421)

I %

7. Muhammad II (1451)

—I.

Müsa (claimant) (1410-13)

North

## Africa

Other Arab states, in North Africa, were in the sixteenth century drawn within the orbit of the rising Turkish crescent. Of these Algeria (al-Jaza'ir, roughly Numidia of the Romans) was the first. In 1518, the year after the conquest of Egypt, Khayr-al-Din Barbarossa and his brother, two Ottoman corsairs of Greek birth, invaded the land, warded off Spanish encroachments and bestowed it upon the Sublime Porte. In exchange the Porte bestowed upon Khayr-al-Din the title of beylerbey (bey of beys).<sup>2</sup> Khayr-al-Din inaugurated a military aristocracy with a corps of Janissaries as its backbone. He also organized for the sultan a well-equipped fleet with seasoned crew, recruited mainly from renegade Christians, Italians and Greeks, and ready to implement aggressive imperial policy throughout the Mediterranean. The fleet carried the terror of the Ottoman name westward to the coasts of Spain, as the Janissaries carried it eastward to the banks of the Tigris. A dangerous neighbour was thereby installed west of Tunisia (Africa of the Romans). Taking advantage of a dispute in the native succession to the Tunisian throne, Khayr-al-Din temporarily occupied Tunis in 1534; the country, however, was not reduced to a Turkish province till forty years later. The land forces against it were led by Sinân Pasha, a brilliant general of Albanian descent, who in 1568 as governor of Egypt had conducted a campaign against South Arabia which netted al-Yaman to the house of 'Uthmân.<sup>3</sup> Before Sinân a great Turkish admiral of probable Christian origin, Pîri Re'is, had operated on the southern and eastern coasts of the peninsula, occupied 'Adan

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 704-5.

<sup>1</sup> Tur. bey, from Turki (East Turkish) beg, a title of honour that is still commonly used, especially by

Egyptians.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Joseph von Hammer, *Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches*, vol. iii (Pest, 1828), p. 551; cf. Qufb-al-Dm al-Makki, al-Barq al-Yamani fi al-Fath al- Uthmâni, tr. Silvestre de Sacy in *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale*^ vol. iv (Paris, 1791-6), pp. 468 seq.\ for further on al-Yaman, consult Husayn A. al-'Arshi, *Bulûgh al-Marâmfi Sharh ħdisk al-Khitâm*, ed. A. M. al-Kirmili (Cairo, 1939), PP-60-80.

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(Aden, 1547) and Masqat (1551) and struck as far as the head of the Persian Gulf. A recently discovered map of his, the so-called Columbus map, shows the Atlantic Ocean and America.<sup>9</sup> First called beys, the governors of Tunisia for over a century after 1705 became known as deys.<sup>10</sup> Even before putting an end to Spanish rule and native dynasties in Tunisia, Sinan Pasha and two other Turkish generals had evicted the Knights of St. John (of Malta) from Tripoli and in 1551 had captured the city. Tripoli (Tarabulus al-Gharb) owes its Greek name to three Phoenician-Carthaginian colonies which with the adjoining territory once formed the province of Tripolitania under Rome. In it the Berber element was weakest. Thus did the Barbary <sup>11</sup> states, with the exception of distant mountainous Morocco (al-Maghrib al-Aqsa, roughly Roman Mauretania), more than half of whose population was of Berber descent, fall within the Ottoman embrace. Generally speaking, the proportion of Berbers in the population increases not only from east to west but also from north to south.

Tripoli, Tunis and Algiers now became seats of provincial governments nominally tributary to the Porte but actually semiindependent, and for a long time each under

native or domesticated rulers, many of whom passed on the reins of government to their descendants. All three governments were dominated by military oligarchies. The claims of the Porte were recognized by the annual payment of tribute, which partook more of the nature of a present. Occasionally the states were convulsed by revolts provoked by the extortions of Ottoman agents. From 1711 to 1835 Tripolitania was administered by the Qaramanli house. The deterioration of the Ottoman fleet from the seventeenth century onward loosened the Ottoman grip on the African provinces and gave their governors, whether pashas, beys or deys, the opportunity to practise an even larger measure of local autonomy than their opposite numbers in Egypt and Syria.

The Barbary provinces developed into corsair states. Directed primarily against Christians, piracy partook first of the nature of <sup>states</sup> a jihad. Like soldiering, it became a profession. The industry was profitable to government and people alike. A fixed duty was levied on the captives and the booty; captives were held for ransom or sold as slaves. For about three centuries the income therefrom was the main source of revenue to the state treasury. Piratical ships took their place at times as units in the Ottoman fleet. Exiles from Moslem Spain <sup>1</sup> swelled the ranks of Mediterranean freebooters whose ravages became the scourge of the sea? The activity reached its height in the first half of the seventeenth century, imperilling the coasts of Italy, France and Spain. In the latter half of that century the naval operations of the British and French compelled respect for their respective flags, but minor powers continued to purchase immunity for their nationals and trade by the payment of annual tribute, an immunity that remained at best precarious. Such was the case with Holland, Denmark and Sweden. Even the United States sought safety in tribute and was in 1783 involved in a war

with Algeria, headquarters of the sea robbers. In 1801 the Qaramanli dey of Tripoli insisted on an increase on the \$83,000 which the United States had been paying annually since 1796 and a four-year war ensued. In 1815 another hostile naval force from America visited Tripoli. It was these naval engagements with the Barbary states that in part stimulated the development of the American fleet.

The splen -dour that was Constantinople

Most of the North African conquests were achieved during the reign of Sulayman I (1520-66), son of the conqueror of Syria and Egypt and the man under whom the Ottoman empire hit the zenith of its might.<sup>3</sup> In Sulayman's reign the greater part of Hungary was reduced, Vienna was besieged and Rhodes was occupied. The Ottoman sway then extended from Budapest on

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 556.

' For more on this consult Stanley Lane-Poole, *The Story of the Barbary Corsaire* (New York, 1891).

» 7. Muhammad II (1451)

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8. Bâyezîd II (1481)

I

9. Salim I (1512)

10. Sulaymân I (1520)

I



## 11. Salim II (1566)

I

## 12. Murad III (1574)

the Danube to Baghdad on the Tigris and from the Crimea to the first cataract of the Nile. This was the greatest Moslem state of modern times; not only that, but one of the most enduring Moslem states of all time. No less than thirty-six sultans, all in the direct male line of \*Uthman, reigned from 1300 to 1922.<sup>1</sup>

Sulaymân was known to his people by the honorific title of al-Qânûni (the lawgiver) because of the high esteem in which later generations held the codes which bore his name.<sup>2</sup> He charged Ibrâhîm al-Halabi (of Aleppo, fi 549) with the task of compiling

## 12. Murad III (1574)

I

## 13. Muhammad III (1595)

## 14. Ahmad I (1603)

## 15. Muçfafa I (1617, 1622)

16. 'Uthman II (1618) 17. Murâd IV (1623) 18. Ibrâhîm (1640)

19. Muhammad IV (1648) 20. Sulaymân II (1687)

21. Ajimad II (1691)

## 22. Muçtafa II (1695)

## 23. Ahmad III (1703)

24 Mahmud I (1730)

25. 'Uthman III (1754)

26. Mustafa III 27. \*Abd-al-Hamîd I (1757) (1774)

I

28. Salim III (1789)

29. Muṭṭafa IV

(1807)

30. Mahmûd II (1808)

31. 'Abd-al-Majid I

(1839)

32. 'Abd-al-'Azîz (1861)

I

33. Murâd V (1876)

34.

'Abd-al-Hamîd II

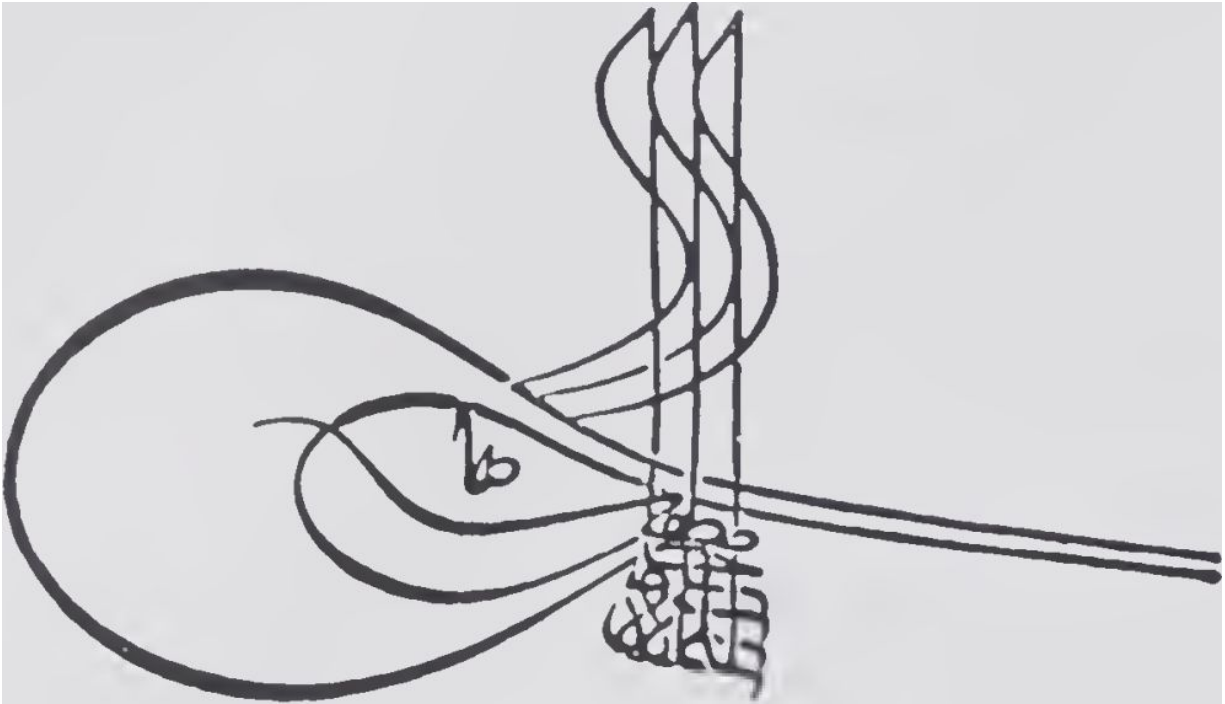
(1876)

35. Muhammad V Rashâd

(1909)

36. Muhammad VI Wahîd-al-Dîn (1918-22)

a book, *Multaqa al-Abhur* (confluence of the seas), which remained the standard work on Ottoman law until the reforms of the nineteenth century.<sup>12</sup> To Europeans, however, Sulayman was



THE TUGHRA, CALLIGRAPHIC EMBLEM, OF SULAYMAN THE MAGNIFICENT, BEARING HIS NAME

known as the Magnificent, and magnificent he was. His court was certainly one of the most resplendent in Eurasia. Note the style he used in addressing a letter to Francis I, king of France:

I who am the Sultan of Sultans, the sovereign of sovereigns, the dispenser of crowns to the monarchs on the face of the earth, the shadow of God on earth, the Sultan and sovereign lord of the White Sea and of the Black Sea, of Rumelia and of Anatolia, of Karamania, of the land of Rum, of Zulkadria, of Diarbekir, of Kurdistan, of Azerbaijan, of Persia, of Damascus, of Aleppo, of Cairo, of Mecca, of Medina, of Jerusalem, of all

Arabia, of Yemen, and of many other lands which my noble forefathers and my glorious ancestors (may God light up their tombs!) conquered by the force of their arms and which my August Majesty has made subject to my flaming sword and my victorious blade, I, Sultan Suleiman Khan, son of Sultan Selim Khan, son of Sultan Bayezid Khan: To thee, who art Francis, King of the land of France.<sup>13</sup>

Sulayman equipped and beautified the capital and other cities with mosques, schools, hospitals, palaces, mausoleums, bridges, aqueducts, caravanserais and public baths, two hundred and thirty-five of which are said to have been built by his chief architect Sinan. Originally a Christian from Anatolia, who perhaps found his way into Constantinople with the usual levy of youth,<sup>14</sup> Sinan developed into the most energetic and distinguished architect that Turkey produced. His masterpiece was the magnificent mosque named Sulaymaniyah, in commemoration of his master's name, and designed to eclipse Santa Sophia. Its majestic dome exceeds that of the Justinian cathedral by about sixteen feet. The mihrab and rear wall are ornamented with exquisite tile in the Persian style. While the limelight illumined the city on the Bosphorus, the once glamorous Madinah. Damascus, Baghdad, Cairo—former capitals of mighty empires and brilliant seats of culture—were functioning as residences for provincial governors and armed garrisons from Constantinople, the city before whose walls had stood on four historic occasions threatening Arab armies from Damascus and Baghdad.<sup>15</sup>

Turkish culture in its entirety was a striking blend of diverse Ottoman and disparate elements. From the Persians, with whom the Turks <sup>cu,ture</sup> had contacts even before migrating to Western Asia, came artistic motifs, belletristic patterns and such political ideas as the exaltation of the monarch. Among

possible bequests from Central Asian nomadism, mention may be made of a predisposition to war and conquest and a hospitable assimilative tendency.<sup>16</sup> The Byzantines, chiefly by way of the Saljuqs of Rum, provided certain military and governmental institutions. But, above all, the Arabs were the teachers of the Turks, in the same sense as the Greeks were the teachers of the Romans. From the Arabs the Turks acquired their sciences, their religion—with its socio-economic principles and sacred law—and an alphabetic system of writing that lingered till 1928. While still in Central Asia the Turks had but little written literature and, for that, Syriac script, introduced by Christian Syrians,<sup>17</sup> was used. With the adoption of Islam and the Arabic characters thousands of religious, scientific, legal and literary terms were borrowed from Arabic and Persian, and many of them are still embedded in Turkish despite recent nationalistic attempts at linguistic purge. In three fields the Ottomans made original contributions of major significance: statesmanship, architecture, and poetry.

The empire of the Ottomans, like those of the Romans and The 'Abbasids before it, was essentially military and dynastic in 's ^p<sup>ial</sup>

character and in organization. The main objective sought was not so much the welfare of its subjects as the welfare of the state personified by the sultan-caliph. The subjects were a conglomeration of nationalities—Arabians, Syrians, 'Iraqis, Egyptians, Berbers, Kurds, Armenians, Slavs, Greeks, Albanians—with diverse creeds, languages and ways of life, held together by the sword of 'Uthman. Even the peasant Turks—as distinct from

the ruling class, members of which preferred to call themselves ' Uthmanli, Osmanli, Ottoman—could be included among the subject peoples. The Turks themselves

were, and remained, a dominant minority group in their vast domain and made no attempt at colonization in the Arab lands. But they kept their blood fresh by marrying non-Moslem women and by admitting to full citizenship any subject who accepted Islam, adopted the Turkish tongue and joined their court. The regular levy of boys, as long as it lasted, enabled them to press into their military and civil service and to assimilate the flower of the male youth of the subject non-Moslem communities. Some of the best talent of the conquered people was sucked and funnelled into the capital, there to be Islamized, Turkicized and utilized to the glory and advancement of the imperial state. Circassians, Greeks, Albanians, Slavs, Italians and even Armenians rose to the highest offices in the empire including the grand vizirate.

inherent A state organized primarily for warfare rather than for the elements of <sup>we</sup> <sub>are</sub> of its people and covering a far-flung unwieldy area with under-developed means of communication and a heterogeneous population among whom the line of cleavage was clearly marked between Moslems and Christians—even between Moslem Turks

and Moslem Arabs and between one Christian sect and another— had the seeds of decay embedded in its basic structure. Once it was confronted with a world in which nationalism was triumphing, its condition became aggravated. The persistence and elaboration of the millet\* system whereby each religious community enjoyed a considerable measure of home rule—which was the classic way by which Islam tried to solve its minority problem— the centralization of supreme authority (at least in theory) in the hands of one man—the sultan-caliph—and the ambiguity in the line of succession added to the inherent weaknesses in the imperial



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Bordeaux

Toulouse

Lisbon

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Rome

Tilimsan

'--Naples

'Sardinia----

BOSNIA

arcelona'

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Oporto

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

AT ITS HEIGHT

ca. 1550

English Miles

200

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400

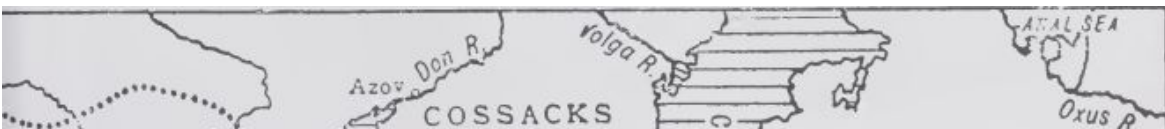
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[Between pages 716 and

set-up. The wonder is that disintegration did not set in much earlier than it did.

Shortly after the death of Sulaymân the empire started on its downward course, a course that was both long and tortuous. The failure of the second attempt on Vienna in 1683 may be considered as marking the beginning of the end; Turkey's expansion in Europe made no further progress.

After that the problem for the Turks became how to hold what they already got rather than to get more; the rôle of the armed forces was no more one of offence but of defence. To the internal forces of corruption and decay were added external forces in the eighteenth century when France, England, Austria and eventually Russia started their quest for “spheres of influence” and began to cast covetous eyes on some possession of the “sick man” of Europe. Mutual jealousies, however, among the competing powers and lack of concerted action gave the patient more than one lease on life.

Of the Arab lands those of North Africa were the first to be lost to the Ottoman empire. Those lands constitute a block by themselves. Proximity to South Europe, distance from the centre and states heart of Islam in Western Asia, the weakness of their Islamic tradition and the high proportion of Berber and European blood made them from the outset pursue a course of their own.

Algeria was the first of the Arab states to be detached from the empire. This was done in 1830, when French troops landed on its shores ostensibly in reprisal for piratical activity and to avenge an insult offered by the ruling dey Husayn to the French consul. Eighteen years later the country was declared French territory with its littoral as an integral part of France. When American troops landed there in November 1942, Laval protested, invoking the decree of 1848 and maintaining that Algeria was a natural prolongation of France.<sup>1</sup> Like any other département, it sent representatives to the French parliament. An eight-year-old bloody conflict between French troops and Algerian nationalists ended in 1962 with a peace treaty leading to Algeria's independence.

The eastward expansion of imperial France resulted in 1881 in the occupation of Tunisia, where the same policy was pursued to a hardly less extent. As in Algeria French replaced Arabic as the literary language of the natives. Though its status was

<sup>1</sup> The New York Times, November 21, 1942<sup>2</sup>-

that of a protectorate, Tunisia was a French possession in all but name. A French resident-general, installed beside the native bey, controlled all the public services. Its proximity to Egypt, however, has kept the national Moslem tradition in it comparatively strong. In Tunisia as in Algeria thousands of French colonists have been domiciled. The Tunisian situation is complicated by the large number and size of Italian colonies. Both countries admittedly enjoyed a higher measure of security and public health and greater facilities for communication under the French. Tunisia was accorded internal autonomy in 1955 and full independence in 1956. Both Tunisia and Algeria are now republics.

Tripolitania, being mostly arid desert with a string of oases along the littoral, was the last Turkish outpost in the Barbary states. As a sequel to the Turko-Italian war of 1911 — 12 Tripolitania was wrested from Ottoman hands, made a colony, and, together with Cyrenaica, incorporated in 1934 into Libia Italiana. In the course of the second World War the Italian troops, assisted by Germans, were expelled from Libya by British, French and native forces. The country was declared in 1951 an independent sovereign kingdom.

In 1901 the French conquest of Morocco, once the seat of two mighty Arab-Berber empires but never a part of the Ottoman empire,<sup>1</sup> began; the French zone was fully acquired between 1907 and 1912. Meantime Spain was busy acquiring her share in the territory just across from its coast.

In 1956 both France and Spain renounced their protectorates in favour of the sultan, now king. Thus did the entire "white Africa" (generally separated from black Africa by the Sahara), which in the eighty-two years following 1830 lay in the hands of the three Latin states of South Europe, liberate itself after the second World War. Until then it had remained relatively unaffected by nationalistic stirrings.

<sup>1</sup> As noted above, p. 711.

## CHAPTER LI

### EGYPT AND THE ARAB CRESCENT

GEOGRAPHICALLY a part of Africa, Egypt has been throughout the ages historically and culturally a part of Western Asia. With greater Syria and al-Traq it forms one Arab block, distinct from the North African block, on one hand, and from the Arabian block (peninsula), on the other.

Other than appointing an Ottoman pasha to act as viceroy over Mamluks Egypt and leaving an army of occupation consisting of some five <sup>w</sup> thousand Janissaries, Sultan Salim made few radical changes in the administration of Egypt. His choice for viceroy fell upon the traitorous Kha'ir Bey, Turkish governor of Aleppo who had betrayed his Mamlük master.<sup>1</sup> Salim spent a few days in Cairo enjoying himself and returned to his capital with a shadow play <sup>2</sup> for the entertainment of his son Sulaymân, the crown prince.<sup>3</sup> The twelve sanjâqs <sup>4</sup> into which Egypt was then divided remained under the old Mamlüks. Each Mamluk bey surrounded himself with a coterie of slave warriors who did his bidding and upheld his authority. Mamlük blood was kept fresh by the importation of slaves mainly from the Caucasus. As in the preceding regime, Mamluks collected taxes and

levied troops, but now they acknowledged Ottoman suzerainty through the payment of annual tribute.

It was not long before the Ottoman pasha sent from Constantinople ceased to exercise any real control over local affairs. His ignorance of the colloquial and of the local scene was a decided handicap. His tenure of office was at best of short duration. In the two hundred and eighty years of direct Turkish rule over Egypt no less than a hundred such pashas succeeded one another.<sup>5</sup> The frequent change in personnel weakened the hold over the army which tended to become unruly and un-<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 703. <sup>1</sup> Cf. above, p. 690.

<sup>8</sup> Ibn-Tyas, vol. v, p. 188.

<sup>4</sup> Tur. sanjiq (Ar. sanjaq}, a translation of Ar. hwa , banner,

• Cf. list in Zambaur, pp. 166-8.

719

720

disciplined. Beginning with the seventeenth century, mutinies became common. Conflicts between pashas and beys became a recurring theme in the political history of the land, with the pasha getting his chance when mutual jealousies and the struggle for supremacy among the beys themselves reached an acute stage. As the central authority in Constantinople pursued its downward course, respect for its viceroys decreased throughout the empire.

Under the dual form of control the native sank deeper in the abyss of misery and poverty. By pasha and Mamluk the cultivator of the soil was relentlessly exploited and driven into a state of abjectness unparalleled except perhaps in the

preceding era. Corruption and bribery prevailed. Insecurity, famine and pestilence added their quota of misery. One pestilence, that of 1619, is said to have carried away more than a third of a million people; another, that of 1643, left two hundred and thirty villages desolate.<sup>1</sup> A contemporary chronicler al-Ishaqi <sup>2</sup> states that while the 1619 plague raged, most of the shops of Cairo were closed, with the exception of those which dealt in shrouds and which remained open day and night. The population of the land, which under the Romans reached some eight millions, had by the end of the eighteenth century dwindled into one-third its former size.

'Ali Bey declared sultan

The rising Mamluk power reached its zenith in 1769 when 'Ali Bey, reportedly son of a Christian priest from the Caucasus, who as a boy had fallen into the hands of brigands and been sold into slavery, acquired enough strength to expel the Ottoman pasha and declare himself independent of the Porte. With the army which the sultan, then engaged in a critical struggle against Russia, had ordered him to amass, 'Ali Bey now proceeded to conquer Arabia and Syria for himself. His lieutenant and son-in-law, abu-al-Dhahab,<sup>3</sup> entered Makkah victoriously in July 1770.<sup>4</sup> Its sharif was replaced by a claimant who in turn bestowed upon 'Ali the pompous title of "sultan of Egypt and ruler of the two seas" (the Mediterranean and Red). The sharzfate or government of Makkah was always held by a descendant of the Prophet.<sup>5</sup> 'Ali not only assumed the title but also the prerogatives that

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Juiji Zaydan, *Tarikh Mi\$ir al-Hadtih*, 3rd ed. (Cairo, 1925), vol. ii, pp. 31, 39-40-

<sup>8</sup> Akhbar al-Uwalfi Man Tasarrafa fi Miṣr min al-Duwal (Cairo, 1296), p. 258. <sup>8</sup> “Father of gold”, so called because he gave nothing but gold pieces as bakshish.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Jabarti, 'Ajd'ib al-Athar fi al-Tardjim w-al-Akhbar (Cairo, 1322), vol. i, PP- 4<sup>22</sup>, 353. • See above, p. 440, n. 8.

pertain thereunto, including the striking of coins and the mention of his name in the public worship. In 1771 abu-al-Dhahab at the



British Museum

COIN OF 'ALI BEY

Silver {yigirmllik, 20 paras), dated 1183 (1769), struck at Misr (Cairo)

head of about thirty thousand men marched against Syria and captured several of its cities, headed by Damascus.<sup>1</sup> In the flush of victory he betrayed his master, entered into



secret negotiations with the Porte and turned his troops against Egypt. 'Ali fled (April 1772) to his Palestinian ally and fellow-rebel, Zahir al-'Umar,<sup>2</sup> in \*Akka. There he received ammunition and a reinforcement of 3000 Albanians from Russian warships anchored in the harbour and returned to fight for his lost throne. Wounded in battle, he died shortly after that (1773), either as a result of the wound or by poison. Abu-al-Dhahab, his former slave, thereupon combined in his person the title of shaykh al-balad (head of the community), a title which had hitherto distinguished the leading Mamluk, and that of pasha, which he received with his investiture from the Porte. The next highest Mamluk office after the shaykh al-balad's was that of amir al-hajj, held by the official in charge of the annual holy pilgrimage. The rise of Ali Bey, ephemeral as it was, exposed the vulnerability of the Ottoman position, the installation of abu-al-Dhahab conceded the right of a Mamluk to become Ottoman viceroy.

The fight among the leading Mamluks for the government of Napoleon Egypt continued until, unexpectedly and as if from nowhere, Bonapart\* a strange, mighty invader landed in Alexandria (July 1798), Napoleon Bonaparte. His professed purpose was to punish the Mamluks, whom he accused in the Arabic proclamation he issued on landing, of being not as good Moslems as he and his

<sup>1</sup> Jabarti, vol. i, p. 3<sup>7</sup>«

<sup>1</sup> See below, pp.

73<sup>1\*2</sup>, fellow-Frenchmen were, and to restore the authority of the Porte.<sup>18</sup> His real purpose was to strike a fatal blow at the British Empire by intercepting her communication with the East and thus make a bid for world dominion. The destruction of the French fleet at Abuqir Bay (Aboukir, August 1, 1798), the check of the ill-fated expedition at cAkka (1799) <sup>19</sup> and the defeat in the battle of Alexandria

(March 21, 1801) frustrated the Napoleonic ambitions in the East and forced the evacuation of the French troops from Egypt. The land hitherto playing a minor role in world events—as a source of tribute for Turkey and a base of operation for maintaining Ottoman dominion over Syria and Arabia—was suddenly drawn into the vortex of international politics as the gateway to India and the rest of the extreme Orient.<sup>20</sup> The Napoleonic expedition turned Europe's eyes to the somewhat forgotten land route to India and set in motion a chain reaction which made the Near East the storm centre of European intrigue and diplomacy.

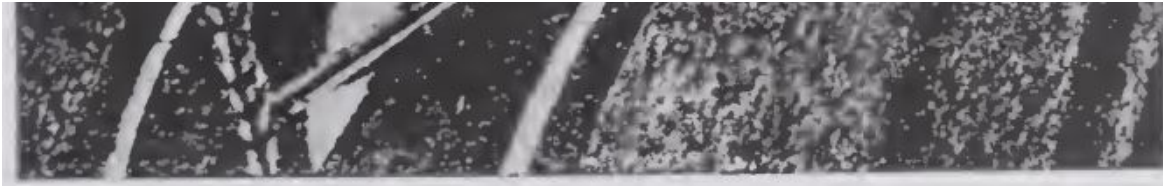
Muhammad 'Ali: founder of modern

Egypt

In the Turkish army that helped to drive Napoleon out of the land was a young officer born in Macedonia named Muhammad \*Ali. The Porte made him pasha in 1805 and he made himself the new master of the valley of the Nile, in nominal subordination to the Porte. The history of Egypt for the first half of the nineteenth century is virtually the story of this one man. Founder of the dynasty that was until 1952 still ruling, Muhammad 'Ali has been rightly called the father of his country—at least in its modern phase. The initiative, energy and vision he displayed and exercised find no parallel among any of his Moslem contemporaries. In peace and in war he stood supreme. By confiscating all land holdings in the hands of private individuals among his subjects he became sole proprietor of the country; by creating a monopoly of the chief products of the land he made himself its only manufacturer and contractor. This was the first attempt at nationalization in the Arab world. In pursuit of his economic policy he excavated canals, promoted scientific agriculture and introduced the cultivation of cotton from India and the Sudan (1821-2).

Himself an illiterate man, he yet patronized learning, started a ministry of education, created a council of education and founded the first school of engineering in his realm





## MUHAMMAD 'ALI, FOUNDER OF MODERN EGYPT

<1816) and the first school of medicine.<sup>21</sup> Professors and physicians he brought mostly from France. He invited missions—military and educational—to train his people, and sent native missions—military and educational—to study in Europe. Records show that between 1813 and 1849 (the year of his death) <sup>22 23</sup> three hundred and eleven Egyptian students were sent to Italy, France, England and Austria at an expense to the state of ;£ £273,360.2 In Paris a special house was maintained for the benefit of these students. The preferred subjects of study were military and naval, engineering, medicine, pharmacy, arts and crafts. Since then the French language has enjoyed a favoured place in the Egyptian curriculum; the French schools in Egypt have even today a higher attendance of students than any other foreign institutions.<sup>24</sup>

A French colonel, Sève, who professed Islam under the name of Sulaymân Pasha, reorganized and modernized the Egyptian army and took part in the invasion of Syria. His name is commemorated in one of Cairo's principal streets and his descendants married into the 'Alid family. Another Frenchman, a naval engineer, constructed the Egyptian navy. The first military venture was in 1811 against Wahhabi Arabia, a war that was not ended till 1818. In honour of the departure of the first troops, some 10,000, under his sixteen-year-old son Tüsün, the viceroy held a reception in the Cairo Citadel to which the Mamlüks were, of course, invited among the honoured guests. The coffee drinking over, the Mamluks filed out through a narrow passage toward the main gate

and were then and there abruptly assailed and slaughtered. Of the four hundred and seventy, very few escaped. The slaughter on the hill was a signal for an indiscriminate one for the rest of them throughout the land. Their properties were confiscated. The almost six-hundred-year-old Mamlük problem in Egypt was for ever solved.

The second series of military campaigns carried the Egyptian flag triumphantly in 1820 into the eastern Sudan (al-Nübah). The conquest was continued by Muhammad \*Ali's successors and bequeathed a problem with which the Egyptians and British are still grappling. In the third venture the Egyptian army and navy collaborated with the forces of the Porte against the Greeks in their struggle for independence. Mahmüd II (1808-39), celebrated for his bold reforms and the extermination of the Janissary corps, was then the ruling sultan. The Turko-Egyptian fleet was destroyed at Navarino (October 20, 1827) by a combined Anglo-French-Russian fleet. Of the seven hundred and eighty-two vessels only twenty-nine remained afloat. The Porte had promised his Egyptian viceroy the government of Syria and the Morea in consideration of his support, and when the promise was not ful-



The American Numismatic Society

COIN OF MAHMUD II

Gold (one-half sikkah, sequin), dated in the twenty-fifth year of his reign, 1247 (1831-2), struck at Mişr (Cairo)



The American Numismatic Society

## COIN OF MAHMOD II

Copper (five paras), dated in the thirty-first year of his reign, 1253 (1837), struck at Misr (Cairo)

filled, Muhammad \*Ali commissioned his son and “mailed arm”, Ibrâhîm, in 1831 to conquer Syria. Ibrâhîm had led the successful 1816 to 1818 campaigns against the Wahhâbis and the unsuccessful expedition against the Greeks. This was indeed the last and greatest military enterprise of Muhammad 'Ali's reign. After occupying Syria for ten years and coming near giving the coup de grâce to the entire Ottoman empire, Muhammad \*Ali at the behest of the European powers had to withdraw his troops to Egyptian soil.<sup>1</sup> Those powers were determined to keep the



empire intact, for their own benefit. They considered the rise of a youthful, vigorous state as something endangering their influence and lines of communication in the East. A firman issued February 13, 1841,

× See below, pp. 733-7.

Syna

Provincial administration

made the pashalik of Egypt hereditary in Muhammad Ali's family; <sup>1</sup> another of the same date invested him with the government of the Sudan.<sup>2</sup> The dream of an Egyptian-Asiatic empire thereby came to an inglorious ending.

The conquest of Syria by Salim I <sup>3</sup> (1516) resulted in no major internal changes in the administration or population of the land. The administrative divisions assumed a new name *walayah*. That of Damascus, enlarged by the addition of Jerusalem, Safad and Ghazzah, was put under Jan-Birdi al-Ghazali, the treacherous governor of Damascus, who like Kha'ir Bey had betrayed his Mamluk master al-Ghawri at the decisive battle of Dabiq.<sup>4</sup> This made al-Ghazali virtual viceroy of Syria.<sup>5</sup> Not satisfied with that, he, on the death of Salim (1520), proclaimed himself an independent sovereign under the title al-Malik al-Ashraf (most noble monarch), struck coins in his name and invited his Aleppo counterpart, Kha'ir Bey, to do likewise. But Sulayman was quick to act. His Janissaries demolished a large part of the Syrian capital and its environs, meted out a punishment to the populace reminiscent of Timur's days<sup>6</sup> and laid the basis for the association between Janissaries and terror which still haunts Syrian memory.



Turkish pashas now followed one another in rapid succession; in the first hundred and eighty years (1517-1697) no less than a hundred and thirty-three of them in Damascus<sup>7</sup>—much worse

<sup>1</sup> Genealogical tree of the royal Egyptian family:



than the Egyptian record.<sup>1</sup> Aleppo saw the faces of nine different walis in the period of three years. Most of these officials had practically bought their appointments and looked upon their office as a means of replenishing their financial resources and glorifying their own selves. At times, even over its imperial officials, the Porte exercised but loose control. The subjects were rayahs,<sup>2</sup> flocks to be shepherded, fleeced and milked. As rayahs they were classified into those religious groups called millets<sup>3</sup> which made of the Syrians a

congeries of small self-contained nationalities. Even Europeans residing in the land were treated as millets, subject to the laws of their own religious heads and enjoying other privileges granted by capitulations. The Venetians were the first to be granted capitulations. In 1521 Sulayman



The American Animistic Society

COIN OF SULAYMAN I

Gold (altun), dated 926 (1520), struck at Halab (Aleppo)

signed a treaty with them set up in thirty chapters.<sup>4</sup> Fourteen years later the French received theirs and the English in 1580. Weak attempts at ameliorating the condition of the subjects in the empire were made by three bold reformers among the sultans, Salim III (1789-1807), Mahmud II (1808-39) and 'Abd-al-Majid I<sup>5</sup> (1839-61), but the practical results were nil. No effective implementation was

provided for the tanzimat, reform regulations, which aimed at removing disabilities under which the rayahs laboured, abolishing the farming out of taxes and guaranteeing the lives, property and honour of all subjects—irrespective of creed or race—who were declared equal before the law. Equally ineffective were the Young Turks' reforms in 1908.

Ottoman maladministration could not be held entirely responsible for the steady decline in Syrian economy. The discovery <sup>ec ne</sup> in 1498 of the sea route from Europe to India around the Cape of

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 719.  
herds.

\* From Arabic, rayah, herds.

<sup>8</sup> From Arabic, rayah, religion, nationality.

<sup>4</sup> Late Latin, capitula, whence "capitulation".

<sup>1</sup> So numbered to distinguish him from the Caliph 'Abd-al-Majid (1825-61).

Good Hope diverted the course of international trade from the Arab East and substituted the Portuguese for the Arabians and Syrians as the middlemen. The Arab lands were thus commercially by-passed. The discovery of the New World in 1492 shifted the centre of gravity in world affairs westward and relegated the Mediterranean, hitherto in name as well as in deed the middle sea, to a side position. That sea had to wait three and a half more centuries before it could regain its position as the great highway of international trade—thanks to the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 by a successor of Muhammad 'Ali, Ismâ'il.<sup>1</sup> In the depopulated Palestine of the eighteenth century the revenue from pilgrims constituted the main item. By the middle of that century the once fertile, sufficiently irrigated

plains between Aleppo and the Euphrates had become what they are today, a desert.<sup>2</sup> By the end of that century the entire population of Syria had estimatedly shrunk to about a million and a half, of whom perhaps less than a couple of hundred thousand lived in Palestine.<sup>3</sup> Jerusalem in the early nineteenth century had an estimated population of 12,000; in the mid-nineteenth Damascus had 150,000, Beirüt 15,000 and Aleppo 77,000?

As Syrian merchants developed overland trade in the first century under Ottoman rule, Aleppo came to be the terminus of the route connecting with al-Traq and ultimately Persia and India. Several European colonies grew in Aleppo, first among which was the Venetian. The French colony capitalized on the capitulations granted Francis I by Sulaymân in 1535 and on the treaty signed in 1740 by Mahmud I and Louis XV, putting all Christian visitors to the Ottoman empire under French protection? Soon French settlements (factories) were spread into other Syrian towns. English merchants followed the French. They all tried to meet the Western demand for Eastern luxuries and products promoted in the Crusading period. All foreigners, being considered by Moslems as inferior to them, had in the early period to wear native dress and thus reduce the chances of personal insult or harm. In the wake of European businessmen came European missionaries, teachers, travellers, explorers. The

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 750.

<sup>1</sup> Christina P. Grant, *The Syrian Desert* (New York, 1938), p. 161, n. 1.

\* Cf. Alfred Bonne, *The Economic Development of the Near East* (New York, 1945), p. 10.  
Bonné, p. it

<sup>4</sup> F. Charles-Roux, *France et chrétiens d'orient* (Paris, [1939]), pp. 68-77.

729 Christian missionary activity, mostly Jesuit, Capuchin and Lazarist, resulted in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the founding of Uniat churches—Syrian (using Syriac in the ritual) and Greek (using Greek). The enlightened and liberal regime of a Lebanese prince, Fakhr-al-Dîn al-Maʿni II (1590-1635), opened the door wide to Western cultural influences.

This prince was named after his grandfather Fakhr-al-Dîn I Fakhr-ai-(-[•1544), who, when the battle raged at Dâbiq between Turk and ^ijened Mamluk for the mastery of Syria, advised his people to stay on amir of the fence and then leap to the winning side as soon as that was Lebanon determined. When Salîm emerged victorious, Fakhr-al-Dîn presented himself with his coterie of Lebanese leaders, kissed the ground before the conqueror and delivered such an impassionately eloquent oration <sup>25</sup> that the sultan confirmed him and his fellow-amirs and shaykhs in their Lebanese fiefs, allowing them the same autonomous privileges enjoyed under the preceding regime and imposing on them a comparatively light tribute. The Turks realized at the outset that Lebanon with its hardy mountaineers of Druzes and Maronites was entitled to a different treatment from Syria. The Turkish wâli in Damascus normally acted as liaison between the Porte and the Lebanese feudal lords, who on the whole acted independently in internal affairs, transmitted their fiefs to their progeny, exacted taxes and duties and rendered no military service to the sultan.

Under Fakhr-al-Dîn II the power of the house of Man, originally an Arab tribe, reached its apogee. The most energetic and fascinating figure in the history of Ottoman

Lebanon if not of all Syria, this diminutive man, from “whose pocket should an egg fall it wouldn’t break”, cherished a threefold ambition: creating a greater Lebanon, severing all relations between it and the Porte and setting it on the road of progress—and he came near realizing his dream. From the Porte he received the sanjâqs of Beirût and Sidon, from his neighbours to the north he wrested Tripoli, Ba'labakk and al-Biqā\*, from his neighbours to the south he received the homage of Safad, Tiberias and Nazareth. He then began to look beyond the seas. In 1608 he signed with Ferdinand, the Medici grand duke of Tuscany, a treaty containing

a secret military article clearly directed against the Porte.<sup>1</sup> A Turkish army from Damascus succeeded in chasing him out of the land, and he, with his family and suite, had to seek haven in Florence, capital of his Italian ally. After a sojourn of five years in Europe (1613-18) he returned to his hereditary domain more determined than ever to enlarge and modernize it. In 1624 the



Front Giovanni Alariti, " Istoria di Faccardino grand-emir  
dei Drusi" (Livorno,  
FAKHR-AL-DIN AL-MA'NI II, AMIR OF LEBANON 159~1635

Porte recognized him as the lord of \* Ar abistan, from Aleppo to the frontiers of Egypt. He imported from Italy architects, engineers and agricultural experts and encouraged improved methods of tilling the soil among his farmer subjects.<sup>2</sup> One of his projects was draining the swampy part of al-Biqā'. More than that, he welcomed Christian missionaries, mainly French Catholic, who now established centres in Beirut, Sidon, Tripoli, Aleppo, Damascus and even in Lebanese villages. Professing Islam before the

<sup>1</sup> For this and other treaties consult P. Paolo Carali (Qara'li), *Fakhr ad-Din li-e ia carte di Toscana* (Rome, 1936-S), vol. i, pp. 146<sup>7</sup>.; vol. ii, pp. 159.577.; G. Mariti, *Istoria di Faccardinogrand-emir dei Drusi* (Livorno, 1787), pp. 74 seq.

<sup>1</sup> Carali, vol. ii, pp. 52 seq.

Ottoman authorities, Druzism before his people, Fakhr manifested such sympathetic interest in Christianity that he was reported to have been baptized.<sup>26</sup> In his amirate Druzes and Christians lived in harmony. His sympathy with Christianity turned once more the suspicious eye of the Porte towards him. Again an army from Damascus marched against him. After offering some resistance he fled to a cave in the mountain near Jazzin, where he was discovered and led in chains to Constantinople in February 1635.<sup>27</sup> There he was beheaded, with his sons, who accompanied him, and his corpse was exhibited for three days in front of a mosque. The independent greater Lebanon which he envisaged and for which he laboured was attempted again by another amir, Bashir al-Shihabi (1788-1840), but was not fully realized until 1943. The Shihabs, who in 1697 succeeded the Ma'ns, trace their pedigree to one of the noblest Arabian tribes, the Quraysh. The founder of the Lebanese ruling family was the son-in-law of the last Ma'nid ruler.



Syrian local governors did not begin to assert themselves until the 'Azm family in the eighteenth century. First among these was Isma'il Pasha in Syria al-'Azm, a Damascene who in 1724 was made wali over his home town. More distinguished than Isma'il was his son and successor, whose palaces in Hamah and Damascus are still among the show places of those cities. Other members of the 'Azm family were appointed over Sidon and Tripoli, but, unlike the Lebanese amirs, remained loyal to the Porte, despite maltreatment from those quarters. Isma'il was jailed before his death and As'ad was treacherously killed (1757) in the bath by orders from Constantinople.<sup>3</sup>

As the Ottoman empire throughout the eighteenth century Palestine speedily declined in authority, dignity and prestige, the number <sup>has its</sup> of local chieftains who sought or achieved independence progressively increased. Palestine, like Lebanon and Egypt, was the scene of the activity of such men, one of the most colourful among whom was al-Shaykh Zahir al-[Al] 'Umar. A Bedouin whose father was installed by the Shihabi governor of Lebanon as shaykh over the Safad district, young Zahir made his political

## 732 OTTOMAN RULE AND INDEPENDENCE part vi

debut about 1737 by adding Tiberias to his shaykhdom.<sup>28</sup> Other cities submitted to him, and by 1750 the usurper had established his seat in 'Akka. This city, which had been in partial ruin since Crusading days, was fortified and developed into an important trade centre. Its new lord ruled with an iron hand. He stamped out brigandage and lawlessness, encouraged the raising of wheat and the industry of silk and cotton and treated with toleration his Christian subjects. In the words of his biographer: <sup>29</sup>

Even a woman could travel around carrying gold in her hand with no fear of being molested”.

Feeling secure in his dictatorial seat Zahir entered into alliance with 'Ali Bey of Egypt. With the co-operation of Russian ships then manoeuvring in the eastern Mediterranean, Russia at that time being embroiled in a bitter struggle with Turkey, he occupied in 1772 Sidon <sup>30</sup> at the foot of Lebanon. Three years later the Shihâbi amir of Lebanon allied himself with the wâli of Damascus and with a contingent from Constantinople attacked Zahir in his capital. In the course of the siege Zahir was killed by one of his men hired to do it. In the Syrian army that had tried to defend Sidon was a petty officer, named Ahmad al-Jazzâr, who then succeeded Zahir and played an even more dramatic rôle.

Originally a Christian from Bosnia, the boy, later to be called Ahmad, committed a sex crime, fled to Constantinople, sold himself to a Jewish slave dealer and landed in the possession of \*Ali Bey in Cairo. The distinguished service he rendered as executioner to his master earned him the epithet al-jazzâr, the butcher. From Egypt al-Jazzâr fled to Syria and, in recognition of his performance in Sidon against Zahir, was made governor of the city.<sup>4</sup> Gradually he extended his authority northward into Lebanon and southward into Palestine, where he succeeded Zahir in 'Akka. Here he surrounded himself with a cavalry corps of Bosnians and Albanians and an infantry corps of Maghribis, fortified the city by forced labour and constructed a small fleet in its harbour. In 1780 the Porte deemed it expedient to bestow on its vassal the wilâyah of Damascus, making him virtually the viceroy of Syria

and the arbiter of Lebanon. Though acknowledging the nominal authority of the Porte, he put Sultan Salim III's

messenger to death with impunity. It was this Ahmad Pasha al-Jazzar who, with the aid of an English fleet under Sir Sidney Smith, successfully withstood and repelled Napoleon's onslaught on 'Akka.<sup>1</sup> A usurper and dictator, al-Jazzar was ruthless in the treatment of enemies and suspects. He had a reputation to uphold associated with his name and uphold it he did. A native chronicler <sup>2</sup> reports how al-Jazzar on one occasion had all thirty-seven of his harem, on a suspicion of infidelity on the part of certain ones among them, dragged to a burning pyre by his eunuchs. His name still lives throughout the land as a synonym of terror and cruelty. In 1804 a career unmarred by failure or defeat came to an end through natural death—an unusual phenomenon.

The lord of Lebanon in the days of al-Jazzar was the Amir Bashir ai-Bashir II (1788-1840), who on the occasion of Napoleon's in-<sup>Shih\*bi</sup>vasion had failed to rush aid to the lord of 'Akka and had thereby incurred his disfavour. Bashir had then to withdraw to Cyprus on a British ship. In 1821 he fled to Egypt, after having reattached al-Biqā' to Lebanon and got involved in disputes with the walis of Damascus and Tripoli. While in Egypt he struck up a friendship with its viceroy Muhammad 'Ali. When Egyptian troops in 1831 under Ibrahim invaded Syria,<sup>3</sup> they found in Bashir and his men a ready ally. Lebanese assisted Egyptian troops in storming 'Akka, which Ibrahim besieged after occupying Jaffa and Jerusalem. Druzes stood before the walls of Damascus, when it surrendered. With the routing of the Turkish army at Himš, the way was open to Asia Minor. The pass in the Taurus had to be in places widened to enable the Egyptian artillery to go through. With the victory at Konieh (Qunyah, ^32) the road was clear to Constantinople. The Egyptian camp was at last pitched at Kutahiah (Kutahiyah), almost within sight of the Bosphorus. This aroused Russia.

Suspicious of her, England as well as France, the latter of which had up to this time encouraged Muhammad 'Ali in his expansive ambitions, were forced to act all in behalf of the sultan. Thus was the Egyptian ambition frustrated.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 722.

Mikha 11 Mushaqah, Mashhad al- Ayan bi-Hawadith Surlya iva-Lubnan<sub>t</sub> ed. Mulhim K. Abduh and Andarawus H. Shakhashiri (Cairo, 1908), p. 54.

\* See above, p. 725.

Ibrâhîm first wooed the favour of his Syrian subjects, especially the Christians among them, by establishing security and justice and introducing social reforms. Hitherto no Christian in such a city as Damascus could appear in public riding on a horse or wearing a white, red or green turban. No Christian could hold a responsible position in government. All these disabilities were now removed. But later, acting on instructions from his father, Ibrâhîm raised the taxes to about three times of what they had been, established a state monopoly over silk and other native products—following the Egyptian precedent<sup>1</sup>—and worst of all insisted on disarmament and conscription. Nothing could have outraged the Syrians, particularly the Lebanese, more than that last measure. The uprising which started in Palestine in 1834 spread into all other parts of Syria. In the manifesto issued June 8, 1840, the Lebanese rebels listed disarmament and conscription first among their grievances.<sup>2</sup> Lebanon was at that time accorded a privileged treatment under its friendly amîr. From its forests Muhammad 'Ali hoped to rebuild his navy, almost annihilated at Navarino.<sup>3</sup> Traces of Egyptian exploitation of coal at Qarnâyil and iron at Marjaba, in the district of al-Matn, are still noticeable. Tempted by these uprisings Sultan Mahmud dared again in

1839 to send an army which was crushed at Nizzib (Nezib, north Syria), putting the empire once more at the feet of its vassal. But again the powers intervened and forced Muhammad \*Ali on November 22, 1840, to evacuate Syria. Ibrâhîm started on his way back from Damascus December 29 via Ghazzah. Bashir was carried on a British ship to Malta.<sup>4</sup> On the international level the Syro-Egyptian episode resulted in strengthening British interest in the East at French expense. Autonomy The Ottoman authorities were now convinced that the only <sup>o</sup><sub>n</sub><sup>f</sup>er<sup>ban</sup>on way to bring Lebanon under their direct control was to stir up national strife between Maronites and Druzes, among whom the general recognized

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 722. J'he first modern silk factory was established in a Lebanese village, Batatir, by a Frenchman in 1841.

<sup>2</sup> Asad J. Rustum, *al- Usûl al- Ar ably ah li-Tarikh. Surly ah fi\* Ahd Muhammad \*Ali*, vol. ii (Beirût, 1933), pp. 101-3; do., *The Royal Archives of Egypt and the Disturbances in Palestine 1934* (Bcirût, 1938), pp. 47-51; Sulaymân abu-Tzz-al-Din, *Ibrâhîm Bâsha fi Sûrlyah* (Beirût, 1929), pp. 313 seq.

<sup>3</sup> Asad J. Rustum, *The Royal Archives of Egypt and the Origins of the Egyptian Expedition to Syria* (Beirût, 1936), pp. 63-6. See above, p. 725.

<sup>4</sup> Shidyâq, p. 620; Mushaqah, pp. 132-4; *al-Jam'iyah al-Malakîyah al-Jughrafiyah, Dhitra al-Bat al al-Fâlih Ibrâhîm Bâsha* (Cairo, 1948), pp. 372 seq.

alignment undei Bashir as under Fakhr-al-Din had followed party rather than sectarian lines; Lebanon's intermittent intestine warfare has up till now been feudal rather than

religious. The Turks were no novices in the application of the maxim—old as Rome—• of divide and rule”. Then this was the time in which they were launching a new policy, that of centralization, in the control of the provinces. The masses among both Christians and Druzes—■ particularly Christians—were in a state of unrest, cherishing discontent toward their feudal aristocracy. North Lebanese peasants, urged by their Maronite clergy, rose in 1858 against their local lords and planned to divide up their large estates among themselves. Bashir, one of the strongest governors Lebanon ever had, had maintained high standards of public safety and equity, opened new roads and encouraged Western cultural and educational influences, but his namesake and successor was of different stuff.<sup>[31](#)</sup>

Civil disturbances between Druzes and Maronites, which under Turkish stimulation began in 1841, culminated in the massacre of 1860, a year which will remain infamous for all time in the annals of the land. ‘Abd-al-Majid I was then sultan. In



The American Numismatic Society

COIN OF 'ABD-AL-MAJID I

Silver (\oghurush, piastres), dated 1255 (1839), struck at  
Misr (Cairo)

this massacre eleven thousand Christians, mostly Maronites,  
are estimated to have perished and a hundred and fifty  
villages burned. Lebanese peasants still date local events in  
their history from this sanat al-jjtrakah (the year of the

strife).<sup>32</sup> The massacre invited European intervention and the occupation of Lebanon by French troops. Consequently the mountain received in 1861 a statute, revised three years later, in which it was allowed an autonomy under a Christian governor-general {mutasarriif) appointed, for a renewable term of five years, with the approval of the signatory powers. All the governors were Catholics. The new Mutasarriflyat Jabal Lubnan, had no Turkish garrison, paid no tribute to Constantinople and its citizens rendered no military service. The name of its first mutasarriif, Dawud Pasha (1861-8), has been borne by a college for boys in ʿAbayh, founded in 1862 and supported as a Druze institution from the waqf.

Under its mutasarriif and its elected administrative council Lebanon prospered as no other neighbouring province prospered; it was regarded as “the most useful example of autonomy applied to a Turkish province”.<sup>1</sup> In it “public security and standards of social and political life advanced to a point not nearly reached by any other province of the Ottoman Empire”.<sup>2</sup> The increase in its population found an outlet through emigration to Egypt, the Americas and Australia, where descendants of Lebanese colonists still flourish. Lebanon’s autonomy continued until the first World War, when it was destroyed by the Turks. To autonomous Lebanon, Western teachers, preachers, physicians and merchants were drawn as to no other land of the Near East. The fact that its population was preponderantly Christian rendered it more hospitable to European and American ideas and practices. More than in the days of Bashir and Fakhr it became the window through which the Arab quadrangle looked westward into the outside world.

**Ai-ʿIraq** The Ottoman career of the valley of the Euphrates, which began in 1534, paralleled that of the valley of the Nile. Turkish pashas and local lords and Mamluks struggled



for ascendancy, while the masses suffered from corruption, insecurity and miscarriage of justice. Here as elsewhere the authority of the provincial governors began to weaken at the end of the sixteenth century, after the brief noontide of the empire had passed. The historical theme revolved on personalities and intrigues in Baghdad, the most important of the three welayahs into which

<sup>1</sup> William Miller, *The Ottoman Empire, 1801-1927* (Cambridge, 1936), p. 306.

<sup>2</sup> *Syria and Palestine* (handbook under the direction of the historical section of the Foreign Office) (London, 1920), p. 37.

the country was divided, the other two being al-Basrah and al-Mawsil (Mosul). The land of ancient renown under Hammurabi and Nebuchadnezzar and of medieval splendour under Hârûn and al-Ma'mûn faded under the Ottomans to a degree of unprecedented and perhaps unparalleled obscurity.

The distinctive features of the 'Iraqi situation stemmed from the preponderance of the Shi'ite element in its population, difficulty of communication with headquarters in Constantinople, proximity to Shi'ite Persia and cleavage between town and tribe. Now, as in Byzantine days, the possession of the country was disputed between Constantinople and Persia. As the seat of the holiest shrines of the Shi'ah—those of al-Husayn in Karbala', of 'Ali in al-Najaf and of the seventh and ninth imams in al-Kâzi-mayn—al-'Iraq was a stronghold of Shi'ism, many of whose adherents looked upon Sunnite caliphs, like the Ottoman sultans, as usurpers. Meanwhile they considered the Persians as friends and allies. The Shi'ah cause constituted a strong bond between al-'Irâq and Persia.

Throughout the sixteenth century Turkey and Persia were in a state of passive if not active hostility. In 1508 Shah Ismâ'îl occupied and held Baghdad till after Salim's victory.<sup>1</sup> In November 1623 Shah 'Abbas occupied Baghdad again, thanks to the betrayal by a Janissary rebel. For fifteen years al-Trâq remained a province of the Safawid kingdom. Turkish interest, aside from tribute, centred in the use of the country as a base against the eastern shores of the Arabian peninsula, which, however, the Turks were never able to hold firmly. The Turko-Persian wars adversely affected the economy of the land and interfered with pilgrimage to the Shi'ite shrines—an important source of national income. The rise of the English East India Company in the early seventeenth century placed al-Trâq in a strategic position on the overland route between East and West. By the end of that century the British had won the race for maritime trade supremacy over their Portuguese and Dutch rivals in the Persian Gulf. The discovery of oil in Trâqi soil enhanced the strategic importance of the country. The oil concession was obtained by the 'Irâq Petroleum Company in 1925 for a period of seventy-five years.

Bedouins by their raids, undiscipline and lawlessness were a perennial source of trouble. Turkish communications between

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 703.

the federal capital and the provincial capital lay at the mercy of wanderers from the desert and tribesmen from the hills. About the mid-eighteenth century several Bedouin tribes of the lower Euphrates who had banded themselves into a federation, al-Muntafiq, brought recurring headaches not only to the pashas of Baghdad but also to the local Mamluks and townspeople.

The Mamluks, whose government was one of autonomous vassalage rather than viceroyalty, were mostly imported Circassian (Cherkes) slaves, the first of whom, Sulayman Agha <sup>1</sup> (later Pasha) abu-Layla, rose to power in 1747. The last Mamluk was Dawud (fiSjo), who was enlightened enough to build schools in Baghdad. For over eighty years the land was in the grip of a Mamluk oligarchy. After the Crimean War (1853-6) Constantinople endeavoured to assert its authority more pronouncedly and planted a strong garrison in Baghdad. It sent in 1869 one of its most progressive and liberal statesmen, Midhat Pasha, as wali. Midhat tried to check lawlessness, settle the Bedouins as peasants, improve irrigation and introduce a system of land registration. So honest was this Turkish official that he had reportedly to sell his watch to meet his travelling expenses back to Constantinople.<sup>2</sup> His brief administration stands out as the only bright spot in an otherwise dark picture. He won further laurels by writing the first constitution of his land,<sup>3</sup> abolished in 1877 by 'Abd-al-Hamid.

## Arabia

The Arabian peninsula stands as a block by itself, distinct from the North African and the Egyptian-Fertile Crescent blocks. As the cradle of Islam, Arabia has a halo of sacredness around it and holds a unique place in the hearts and minds of believers throughout the world. Its sacred association, geographic isolation and underdeveloped communications stamped it with a medieval feature which it still maintains. Especially isolated and insulated against Western ideas and influences have been al-Hijaz and al-Yaman, the most self-contained parts of the Near East.

Though it never formed an integral part of the scene of the activity of the Prophet, al-Yaman, nevertheless, has been

equally as self-contained as al-Hijaz, if not more. Its people are followers of Zayd, grandson of al-Husayn, who was killed about 740 in an

<sup>1</sup> Originally a Turki word meaning elder brother, agha was used by Ottoman Turks first for master, lord, and later as a title for any army officer up to the grade of captain.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen H. Longrigg, *Four Centuries of Modern Iraq* (Oxford, 1925), p. 300. \* See Ilitti, *History of Syua*. p 070

uprising against the Umayyads. Though an offshoot of the Shi'ah the Zaydis (Zuyud) do not emphasize Shi'ite tenets and come close to being Sunnites. One of them, Qasim by name, succeeded in 1633 in expelling the Turkish wali and establishing a native imamate which endured with many vicissitudes till 1871. Beginning with 1849, however, the country was again administered as a Turkish walah until the rise of the Imam Yahya in 1904. In the following year the imam occupied San'a', later to become his capital, but the autonomy of his state was not recognized by the Porte until 1911. In fact the Turks did not entirely withdraw from the country until the last year of the first World War. Yahya fell victim to a palace conspiracy in February 1948. A recent visitor to al-Yaman, himself a Moslem from Damascus and accompanied by a special guard from the imam, came near being attacked by natives at Ma'rib simply because he looked gharzb, foreign.<sup>1</sup> A Lebanese American writer, Ameen Rihani, met in the early 1920s theologians in al-Yaman who would put dark glasses on their eyes to avert defilement by the sight of a Christian.

Aside from the fully independent Su'udi Arabia and al-Yaman, the peninsula prior to 1960 consisted politically of

the Aden colony and Aden protectorate, the sultanate of Masqat (Muscat) and Uman, the trucial shaykhdoms, and the autonomous shaykhdoms of Qatar and al-Bahrayn, all dependent in varying degrees on Great Britain, and under her protection. Another Persian Gulf shaykhdom, al-Kuwayt, was declared by the British autonomous in 1914 and an independent amirate in 1961\* This oil-rich country is perhaps the most affluent in the world in per capita income terms. 'Uman and the south-eastern coast of Arabia came early under Portuguese, and later British, influence and, unlike al-Hijaz, Najd and al-Yaman, were never brought under Turkish control.<sup>2</sup> For nearly a century and a half its sultanate, nominally independent with its seat at Masqat, had maintained close ties with the British government, ties that were reaffirmed in a treaty signed as late as 1939. From the southeastern end of the peninsula of Qatar to a distance of three hundred and sixty miles south-eastward, the coast of the Gulf, formerly known as the Pirate Coast, belongs to the trucial shaykhs. After a period of hostility with the East India Company

<sup>2</sup> Nazih M. al- Azm, *Rzhlah fi Bzlad al-'Arab al-Sa'idah* (Cairo, 1937?), p. 20.

Royal Institute of International Affairs, *The Middle East* (London, 1950), pp. 110-13. Cf. above, pp. 710-11.

these shaykhs signed (1820) with the British government a general treaty prescribing peace and abstention from piracy and slave trade. Qatar's relation to the British government was similar to that of the shaykhdoms to its south and was regulated by a treaty signed in 1916. Al-Bahrayn's status is practically the same. To the island's world-famous but declining pearl-fishing industry was added in 1932 a much more remunerative industry —that of oil.

In 1968 the British government announced plans to withdraw in three years all military forces in the Persian Gulf. Representatives of al-Bahrayn, Qatar and the seven trucional states then began planning the creation of a federation of Arabian amirates.

The Aden ('Adan) protectorate extended eastward from the Aden colony and included Lahaj, Hadramawt, Mahrah and Suqutra (Socotra). Until the mid-eighteenth century the region was under the imam of San'a'. Aden, the seaport-fortress and capital, was acquired in 1839. In 1967 the entire area became independent and formed the Republic of Southern Yaman.

## Wahhàbis

The modern history of Arabia does not begin till the rise of the Muwahhidun (unitarians) in the mid-eighteenth century. This was a puritan revival inaugurated by a Najdi from al-'Uyaynah named Muhammad ibn-'Abd-al-Wahhab (fi792). After travelling in al-Hijaz, al-Traq and Syria, ibn-'Abd-al-Wahhab returned home impressed with the idea that Islam, as practised by his contemporaries, had deviated widely from the orthodox practice and theory as prescribed by the Prophet and the Koran, and he himself determined to purge it and restore it to its primitive strictness. His inspiration he obviously drew from ibn-Hanbal as interpreted by ibn-Taymiyah.<sup>33</sup> The new prophet found in Muhammad ibn-Su'ud (fi 765), who was then a petty chief in Central Arabia, an ally and son-in-law. This was another case of marriage between religion and the sword, resulting in the speedy spread of religion and of the authority of ibn-Su'ud throughout Central and Eastern Arabia. The followers of ibn-'Abd-al-Wahhab were called Wahhabis by their opponents. In their zeal to rid Islam of its cult of saints and other innovations (sing, bid'aji) they sacked Karbala' in 1801,

captured Makkah in 1803 and al-Madinah the following year, destroyed venerated tombs and purged these cities of all that savoured of idolatry.<sup>1</sup> In the following year they invaded Syria and al-Traq and extended their domain from Palmyra to 'Uman, the largest in the peninsula since the Prophet's days. Their success was interpreted as a token of displeasure on the part of God with the innovations of Salim III.<sup>2</sup> Alarmed, the Porte requested Muljammad 'Ali to conduct the series of campaigns which ended in 1818 with the destruction of the Wahhabi power and the razing of their capital al-Dir'lyah to the ground.<sup>3</sup> Wahhabi tenets, however, continued to spread, and their influence was felt from Sumatra in the east to Nigeria in the west.

Except for a short period of restoration beginning in 1833, the Ibn-Su'ud movement remained in a state of eclipse until resuscitated by its present head 'Abd-al-'Aziz ibn-Su'ud, the restorer of the Wahhabi state and Wahhabi dynasty. Starting his career as an exile in al-Kuwayt, 'Abd-al-'Aziz in the first quarter of the twentieth century carved for himself a kingdom, at the expense of the ibn-Rashid family in Ha'il and the Sharif Husayn family in Makkah,. extending from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea. Husayn had, at the instigation of the British, declared himself "king of the Arabs" in 1916, and in 1924 he assumed the title of "caliph of the Moslems".<sup>4</sup> 'Abd-al-'Aziz put an end to the Rashid dynasty in 1921, occupied Makkah in 1924, al-Madlnah and Juddah in 1925, and in 1932 created the Su'udi Arabian kingdom with himself at its head.<sup>5</sup> Ibn-Su'ud declared tribal raids illegal, regulated fees for the transport of pilgrims, established a high standard of public safety, introduced the radio, wireless telegraphy, telephone and motor-car to certain localities and tried, but not very successfully, to establish his nomadic subjects as Ikhwan (brethren) in agricultural settlements.<sup>6</sup> More than the holy pilgrimage, the Arabian American Oil

Company, which received its first concession in 1933, has become the greatest source of income to both government and people. Its contribution to the modernization of Arabia is still progressing.

No intellectual work of high order could be expected under the inteiiect-

1

'Uthman ibn-Bishr,'Unwan al-Majd fi Tarikh Najd (Makkah, 1349), vol. i, 121-3; Musil, Northern Negd, pp. 261-7.

See above, p. 727.

See above, p. 727; ibn-Bishr, vol. i, pp. 155-207.

For his uprising against the Turks, see Amin Sa'id, al-Thaivrah al' Ar ably ah al-

rp.

2

3

4

Kubra, vol. i (Cairo, 193-?), pp. 120 seq.

<sup>5</sup> For details, consult H. St. J. B. Philby, Arabia (London, 1930), pp. 160 seq.

• K. S. Twitchell, Saudi Arabia (Princeton, 1947), pp. 121 seq.



political and concomitant social and economic conditions that prevailed in Arab states under Ottoman rule. But the source of evil went deeper. The Islamic creative spark had faded away centuries before the advent of the Turks.<sup>1</sup> The complete victory of scholastic theology beginning with the thirteenth century, the ascendancy of the orthodox and the mystics in the spiritual realm, the decay of the scientific spirit and the prevalence of uncritical reverence for the past and adherence to tradition militated against scholarly investigation and productivity. The fetters which bound Arab intellect did not begin to loosen until the early nineteenth century under the impact of the West.<sup>2</sup>

The writers of the period were by and large commentators, compilers and abridgers. Literary formalism and intellectual rigidity characterized their works. Among the Arabic-writing Turks the name of Häjji Khalfah (d. 1657) stands supreme. Called by the Turks Kätib Chelebi (young scribe), this Constantinopoli-tan started his career as a military clerk in the army operating in Baghdäd and Damascus. His *Kashf al-Zunün 'an al-Asami w-al-Funün* <sup>3</sup> (removing of doubts relating to titles and sciences) is one of the greatest and most valuable bibliographic and encyclopaedic treatises in the Arabic language

The literary activity in Egypt was exemplified in 'Abd-al-Wahhâb al-Sha'râni (d. 1565), a mystic whose works embraced not only Sufism but also koranic and linguistic sciences. Al-Sha'râni conversed with angels and prophets,<sup>4</sup> was tried for impiety by conservative theologians and left a long list of works,<sup>5</sup> some of which became popular despite their lack of originality. In his *al-Tabaqat al-Kubra* <sup>6</sup> (the great classes) the lives of the most famous mystics are sketched.<sup>7</sup> Egypt was the scene of the scholarly activity of a noted lexicographer, al-Sayyid Murtada al-Zabldi, who was born in

1732 in north-west India. While pensioned by the government, al-Zabldi produced in Cairo a voluminous commentary on al-Flrüzäbädi's monumental al-

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 683.  
745 seq.

<sup>2</sup> See below, pp.

<sup>2</sup> Ed. and tr. Gustav Flügel, 7 vols. (Leipzig and London, 1835-58).

<sup>4</sup> Al-Anwār al-Qudsiyah fi Bayān Ädäb al\* Ubüdiyah, on margin of his al-Talaqāt al-Kubra (Cairo, 1935), vol. i, pp. 2 seq.

<sup>5</sup> For this, consult Brockeimann, Geschichte, vol. ii, pp. 336-8.

<sup>6</sup> 2 vols. (Cairo, 1925).

<sup>7</sup> For Sufism as the dominant feature of Islam in Ottoman Egypt consult Tawflq al-Tawil, al-Tasawwuf fi Mi\$ir ibbän al\* Afr al\* Uthmäni (Cairo, 1946), pp. 6-51, 200-232.

Qamus<sup>34</sup> entitled Taj al- Arils (the bride's tiara).<sup>35 36</sup> He also wrote a massive commentary on al-Ghazzali's Ihya . Al-Zabldi was a victim of the plague of 1791. Of the Egyptian chroniclers used in the composition of this chapter the most important is 'Abd-al-Rahman ibn-Hasan al-Jabarti (f 1822), whose ancestors had come to Cairo from Jabart in Abyssinia. Al-Jabarti held the chair of astronomy in al-Azhar and was appointed by Napoleon member of the grand council (diwan), through which the French invader hoped to rule the country. That al-Jabarti was murdered on his way home on orders from Muhammad f'Ali, of whom the historian was critical, has no basis in fact. His ' Ajaib al-Athdr fi al-Tarajzm

w-al-Akhbar<sup>2</sup> (the marvels of relics concerning biographies and news) is partly a chronicle and partly a necrology.'

Of the Lebanese chroniclers cited in this chapter three were Maronites. Istifan al-Duwayhi [37](#) (j- 1704) was educated in the seminary established by Pope Gregory XIII in 1584 in Rome for training Maronite students for clerical careers. Al-Duwayhi rose to the highest office in his church, the patriarchate. Al-Amlr Haydar [38](#) (j-1835) was a member of the aristocratic Shihab family, which provided Lebanon with many of its feudal governors. Tannus al-Shidyaq [39](#) (f 1859) was born near Beirut and held a judgeship under the Shihabi amirs. But the most distinguished Maronite—in fact, Lebanese—scholar of the age was undoubtedly Yusuf Sim'an al-Sim'ani (Assemani, 1687-1768), another product of the seminary in Rome. It was mainly through the efforts of this erudite Lebanese that Oriental studies, especially as they relate to Christian sects, were somewhat popularized in the West. His work at the Vatican Library resulted in the addition of a large number of Oriental manuscripts to the collection now considered one of the richest in the world. Al-Sam<sup>f</sup>ani's masterpiece *Bibliotheca Orientalis* [40](#) embodies his researches on these manuscripts in Syriac, Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, Turkish, Ethiopic and Armenian, and is still a major source of information on the churches of the East.

In Syria two authors may be considered as typifying the literary spirit of the age, al-Muhibbi and al-Nabulusi. Both were Damascenes and wrote prolifically. Muhammad al-Muhibbi (j- 1699) received his education at Constantinople and was for a time assistant judge in Makkah and professor in his native city. His principal work <sup>1</sup> is a collection of twelve hundred and ninety biographies of celebrities who died in the eleventh Moslem century (1591-1688). <sup>c</sup>Abd-al-Ghani al-Nabulusi (j\* 1731), whose family, as the name indicates, was

originally Palestinian, was a Sufi and traveller. He produced a large number of works, most of which remain unpublished.<sup>2</sup> Mysticism lay at the centre of his interest, but his travel reports, though emphasizing holy shrines and legends connected with them, constitute his main contribution to knowledge.

<sup>1</sup> Khulasat al-Atksrfi A'yan al-Qarn al-Hadi-'Askar, 4 vols. (Cairo, 1284).

\* One of his last works to be published deals with tradition, Dhakhair al-Mawdrith. /i al-Dalalah 'ala Mawatfi al-ljadh, 4 vols. (Cairo, 1934).

## CHAPTER LII

### THE CHANGING SCENE: IMPACT OF THE WEST

NAPOLEON'S descent on Egypt was epoch making in more than one way. It marked the beginning of the break with the past. Along with his other equipment the French invader brought to Cairo an Arabic press which he had plundered from the Vatican. This press was the first of its kind in the valley of the Nile. It developed into the renowned Matba'at Bülâq, still the official printing institution of the government. The French conqueror used it for issuing a propaganda sheet in Arabic. He moreover inaugurated a sort of académie littéraire with a library. Until that time the people of the Arab world were generally leading a self-contained, traditional, conventional life, achieving no progress and unmindful of the progress of the world outside. Change did not interest them. This abrupt contact with the West gave them the first knock that helped to awaken them from their medieval slumber. It kindled the intellectual spark that was to set a corner of the Moslem world on fire.

Recognizing the possibilities of this preliminary cultural con-Cultural tact, Muhammad 'Ali started the process of inviting French and other European officers to train his army. He went beyond that Egypt and sent student missions to be trained in Europe.<sup>1</sup> In this he followed the precedent established by the Ottoman Turks. In both cases the point of departure was the military. But language, a prerequisite for military training, once acquired, holds the key for unlocking an entire treasure house of thought—in this case Western thought with its nationalistic, democratic, scientific, secular and other explosive ideas. The founder of modern Egypt proceeded to establish on the soil of his own land schools not only for military science but for medicine, pharmacy, engineering and agriculture. Unfortunately, however, of the multitude of educational institutions then founded by Muhammad 'Ali only a few survived his death. His grandson 'Abbas (1848-54) dismissed

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 723-4.

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all foreign advisers and abolished all foreign schools as well as most other institutions of European character; his successor Sa'id (1854-63) was equally opposed to Western ways. Nor did many of the institutions founded by Ismâ'il (1863-79) live long. Ismâ'il, who employed American officers in his military academy, was the first to establish schools for girls in Egypt. His sympathetic attitude toward the West found expression in the alleged declaration that Egypt was part and parcel of Europe. These schools were not adequately equipped or effectively implemented, had no special endowments, no continuous supply of trained scholars from whom to choose the staff, and could count on no uninterrupted output of text-books in Arabic, the language of instruction. One institution, however,

founded by Ismâ'il achieved permanency, the national library, which he started with a few books from palaces and mosques and now contains half a million volumes. The Royal Geographical Society of Egypt, also founded by him, celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary in 1950 to 1951.

During Ismâ'il's reign an American college was founded at Asyüt (1865) and is still in operation. The American College for Girls at Cairo began as a primary school in 1861. Seven years earlier the American United Presbyterian Mission had launched its work in Egypt.

### Syria and Lebanon

The decade of Egyptian occupation of Syria (1831-40)<sup>1</sup> was epoch making in the cultural history of that land. Ibrâhîm undermined the powers of local lords (sing, muqâti ji), enforced regular taxation, and compelled recognition of the rights of non-Moslems to hold office in the local government.<sup>2</sup> Unlike earlier proclamations by sultans,<sup>3</sup> his proclamation in 1839 of equality before the law of members of all religious denominations was immediately implemented and put into effect. Against the Moslems of Damascus and Safad who objected to the changed status of their dhimmi fellow-citizens, he did not hesitate to use force. Four years before the issuance of his proclamation the British consul had to be closely guarded as he entered Damascus riding; the year following the issuance he could go where he pleased unattended.<sup>4</sup>

The evidence of a new liberal policy and of public security attracted Europeans as never before. The Jesuits, whose order had been suspended by the pope in 1773, returned in force.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 725.  
above, p. 727.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 734.

<sup>3</sup> See

<sup>4</sup> Syria and Palestine, p. 27.  
31.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. above, pp. 730-

Protestant missionaries—British and American—established a firm foothold on Lebanese soil. In 1838 the native Protestant Church of Syria was founded. In the same year an American archaeologist, Edward Robinson, made an exploratory tour of Palestine, the first in a chain of events that ultimately resulted in unearthing, interpreting and publicizing the region's priceless treasures of the past. Three years before that the American mission press was moved from Malta to Beirüt. The Imprimerie Catholique of the Jesuits was founded in 1853 on the other side of the town. These two are still the outstanding Arabic presses of Western Asia. Translations of the Bible into modern Arabic were issued by both establishments. Syria had its first Arabic press before this time, in 1702 at Aleppo, to which it was introduced by Christians. Moslem conservatism as it relates to the treatment of the word of God may have retarded the admission of the printing industry; even today the Koran may be handwritten or lithographed but not printed. The origin of the Aleppine press, the first of its kind in the East, is still shrouded in mystery. Very likely it stemmed from some European antecedent. The earliest Arabic press in Europe made its appearance in Fano, Italy, evidently under papal aegis. From its output there has survived a book of prayer dated 1514\* Lebanon had, in one of its monasteries, Qazhayya, a Syriac press which may have been introduced from Rome by one of those Maronite scholars who studied there.<sup>1</sup> From this press we have copies of the Psalms not only in the Syriac language but also in Arabic printed in Syriac characters.<sup>2</sup> Syriac, it should be

remembered, was still spoken in North Lebanon as late as the end of the seventeenth century.<sup>3</sup>

American educational enterprise crowned its efforts in 1866 by the establishment of the Syrian Protestant College, now the American University of Beirut. Jesuit educational activity, which had its start in the early seventeenth century,<sup>4</sup> culminated in the founding in 1881 of the Université Saint-Joseph in Beirut. These two universities have maintained their educational leadership in that part of the world.

Earlier than the American University came the American

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 743.

<sup>2</sup> Garshum; see Hitti, *History of Syria*, p. 546. Consult Louis Cheikbo, "Ta'rikh Fann al-Tiba'ah fi al-Mashriq", *al-Mashriq*, vol. iii (1900), pp. 251-7. 355-62.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. d'Arvieux, *Mémoires* (Paris, 1735), vol. j b P- 4°7i above, p. 361.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 730.

School for Girls in Beirut (1830), which has continued to the present day. The Lazarist mission, inaugurated in Damascus as early as 1755, started about two decades later a school for boys, the oldest modern school still in existence in that city. These schools preceded any modernized government schools and served as models for later institutions, whether public or private. Until the present day the study of foreign languages is emphasized, even in native schools, and either French or English is often the medium of instruction on the higher and professional levels. The personnel enjoyed



special privileges, including protection by virtue of the capitulations

Native schools, presses, newspapers, magazines and literary societies, following Western patterns, soon began to make their appearance. Egypt witnessed its first Arabic paper in 1828, when Muhammad 'Ali founded *al-Waqai' al-Misriyah* (Egyptian events), still the official organ of the government. Syria had its first newspaper in 1858, when Khalil al-Khuri founded in Beirut *Hadlqat al-Akhbar* (orchard of news). Twelve years later Butrus al-Bustani (1819-83), who headed a native school and collaborated with American missionaries, started in Beirut a political, scientific and literary fortnightly, *al-Jinan* (gardens), one of many periodicals founded by him. The motto he chose for his new publication, "Patriotism is an article of faith", gave the formula a new meaning in the Arabic language. In 1876 al-Bustani began publication of an Arabic encyclopaedia (*Dairat al-Ma'rifat*) of which he himself completed the first six volumes.<sup>1</sup> The writings of this Christian scholar, which also included a dictionary and several text-books in mathematics and grammar, prepared the way for arousing national consciousness and starting the Arab national movement. Lebanon has achieved the highest rate of literacy among Arab states largely through the efforts of foreign and private institutions of learning rather than through publicly supported schools.<sup>2</sup> Even today the highest type of education is conducted in American and French institutions. Lebanon as well as other Arab lands proved hospitable to this cultural migration from the West chiefly because their two civilizations, while differing in certain important respects, still

<sup>1</sup> For more on him consult Jurji Zaydan, *Tarajim Mashahir al-Sharq fi al-Qarn al-Tasi'*- Ashar (Cairo, 1903), vol. ii, pp. 24-31.

<sup>2</sup> Matthews and nkrawi, p. 407.

belong to the same main stream. Both European and Near Eastern civilizations share in a common heritage of Judaeo-Christian and Greco-Roman traditions. Social and commercial contacts were maintained, with varying degrees of closeness, from the earliest of days. In fact, up to the fourteenth century, the early Mamluk era, distinction between East and West was more artificial than real. It was not until the sixteenth century, the dawn of the Ottoman age, that the paths of the two began seriously to diverge, the West exploiting the scientific method with its adjunct of experimentation and developing technical knowledge with the resultant greater control over physical nature, while the East remained unmindful of all that. By the end of the eighteenth century the divergence had reached its limit and the two cultures began to come together again.<sup>1</sup>

[1](#)

The custom of kissing the ground before the sultan, established by the Fatimid al-Mu'izz, was first abolished by Barsbay, who substituted for it the kissing of the sultan's hand. Later, however, the old practice was revived with some modification; ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. vi, pt. 2, pp. 558-9.

[2](#)

Vol. vi, pt. 2, pp. 612-18, 620.

[3](#)

' 'Ajaib al-Maqdur fi Akhbar Taymur (Cairo, 1285), p. 6.

[4](#)

Ibn-Taghri-Birdi, vol. vi, pt. 2, p. 52.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 68.

5

\* Vol. vi, pt. 2, p. 5, l. 14, pp. 50 *icq.* Cf. Mirkhwand, *Ta rikji Rawdat al-Safd'*

6

(Teheran, 1270), Bk. VI.

<sup>4</sup> P. 136.

7

Ibn-Iyas, ed. Paul Kahle et al., vol. v (Istanbul, 1932), pp. 67-9.

8

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. pp. 138 seq., 145 seq.

' Ibid. p. 145.

9

Paul Kahle in *The Geographical Review*, vol. xxiii (1933), pp. 621-38; cf. Hajji Khalfah, vol. ii, pp. 22-3; consult Piri Reis, *Bahriyah*, ed. Paul Kahle, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1926). The Turks had occupied 'Adan once before, 1538.

10

Tur. day, maternal uncle.

11

Land of the Barbarians—a term applied by the Greeks to all peoples living outside the pale of Greek civilization. The Romans applied "Barbary" to the region west of Egypt.

[12](#)

See Hitti, History of Syria, p. 664.

[13](#)

- Roger B. Merriman, Suleiman the Magnificent (Cambridge, 1944), p. 130.

[14](#)

- See above, p. 7°3> n-

[15](#)

See above, pp. 299-300.

[16](#)

Albert H. Lybyer, The Government of the Ottoman Empire in the Time of Suleiman the Magnificent (Cambridge, 1913), p. 18.

[17](#)

- See Hitti. History of Syria, pp. 518-19.

[18](#)

Copy of proclamation in Jabarti, vol. iii, pp. 4-5; it begins Moslemwise with the formula: In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate; summarized in al-Sharqawi, Tuhfat al-NazirIn fi man Waliya Misr min al-Walat w-al-Salatin

[19](#)

(Cairo, 1286), p. 55; English translation in Copies of the Original Letters from the Army of General Bonaparte in Egypt, Intercepted by the Fleet under the Command of Admiral Lord Nelson, 11 th ed., vol. i (London, 1798), pp. 235-7.

[20](#)

See below, p. 733.  
below, p. 745.

[20](#) On the cultural effects, see

[21](#)

Founded in 1827 this school is today included in Fu'ad I University; Roderic D. Matthews and Matta Akrawi, Education in Arab Countries of the Near East (Washington, 1949), p. 80.

[22](#)

The centennial of his death was commemorated by founding a university in Asytit bearing his name.

[23](#)

'Umar Tûsün, al-Ba athât al-' Ilmiyah (Alexandria, 1934), p. 414.

[24](#)

<sup>2</sup> Matthews and Akrawi, p. 116.

[25](#)

Quoted in Haydar, 561; Isflân al-Duwayhi, Tarikh al-Taijah al-Mârûniyah, ed. Rashid K. al-Shartûni (Beirut, 1890), p. 152;

Tannūs al-Shidyâq, *Tarîkh al-A'yân fi Jabal Lubnân* (Beirût, 1859), p. 251; see Hitti, *History of Syria*, pp. 665-6.

[26](#)

Carali, vol. ii, pp. 640 seq.

<sup>1</sup> Duwayhi, pp. 204-5; Shidyaq, pp. 330-35; Carali, vol. ii, pp. 340-56.

<sup>3</sup> Muhammad Iḥṣān al-'Alī, *Khilat al-Sham*, vol. ii (Damascus, 1925), pp. 259, 290-Qi; Haydar al-Shihabi, *Tarikh*, ed. Na'um Mughabghab (Cairo, 1900), p. 769.

[27](#)

B

[28](#)

Volney, *Voyage en Syrie et en Égypte*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1787), vol. ii, p. 85; Shidyâq, p. 360; Haydar, p. 801; Mikhaïl N. al-Ṣabbâgh (al-'Akkâwī), *Tarîkh al-Shaykh Zâhir cil-'Umar al-Zaydâni*, ed. Qustantîn al-Bâsha (Harîsa), pp. 31-3.

[29](#)

Ṣabbâgh, p. 50.  
389.

<sup>8</sup> Ṣabbâgh, p. 115; Shidyâq, p.

[30](#)

<sup>4</sup> Haydar, pp. 811, 827.

[31](#)

Following the Egyptian example, Bashir I and his sons doffed the turbans in favour of the MaghriLi fez {tarbush}, short with thick tassel, still worn by some of the old generation in Lebanon and Syria. Cf. Haydar, pp. 1035-6.

[32](#)

See Ilitti, History of Syria, pp. 694-5.

[33](#)

See above, p. 689.

[34](#)

Originally meaning ocean, this word has become synonymous with dictionary.

[35](#)

10 vols., Cairo, 1307.

[36](#)

The edition used here is in 4 vols. (Cairo, 1322).

[37](#)

Tarikh al-Ta if ah al- Alarunly ah, ed. Rashid K. al-Shartuni (Beirut, 1890).

[38](#)

<sup>8</sup> Tarikh, ed. Na' 'um Mughabghab (Cairo, 1900).

[39](#)

<sup>c</sup> Akhbar al-A'y an fi Jabal Lubnan (Beirut, 1859).

[40](#)

\* 4 vols. (Rome, 1719-28).



In this process of cultural cross-fertilization al-Iraq had no significant share. Catholic missionaries had been admitted to Baghdad and al-Basrah as early as the seventeenth century but had left no dent on its Moslem society. Of the 'Iraqis hardly any but officers and functionaries trained in Constantinople were exposed to modern ideas, and those were of a special brand. But the country was wide open to commercial penetration. As the British consolidated their position in the Persian Gulf, commercial infiltration led eventually to political penetration and the country was drawn into the orbit of world affairs.

Ibrahim's invasion of Syria and Napoleon's invasion of Egypt Political produced in a sense the same results: they closed the ancient order  $Po^{etra}$  of decentralized authority in both lands and ushered in a new era of centralized dependence. More than that, they threw these lands into the cockpit of foreign imperial machinations. The expansionist trends of the Great Powers began to clash there as nowhere else. Especially keen was the rivalry between England and France, each endeavouring to obtain for herself a preponderating influence in Egyptian and Syrian affairs for the same reason: securing the fullest measure of advantage for her trade with India and the Far East. Many of the wars of the nineteenth century may be traced to some origin in the Near East. The Crimean War (1854-6) had as one of its causes conflicting claims on the part of France and Russia for the protection of the holy places in Palestine.

<sup>1</sup> Sarton, Introduction, vol. iii, pp. 21-2.

The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 enhanced the strategic importance of these lands and accelerated their re-entry upon the scene of world trade and world affairs. The canal soon became an integral part of the life-line of

international communication and compensated for the loss sustained through the discovery of the route around the Cape of Good Hope.<sup>1</sup> The digging of the canal, a hundred miles long, cost about £20,000,000, most of which was raised by public subscription in Europe, chiefly in France. The khédivial shares were 176,602 at £20 each, which in 1875 were purchased by the British government.

The

### British occupy Egypt

In Egypt the extravagance of Ismâ'il, in whose reign the canal was opened, led to state bankruptcy and eventually to European intervention. In consideration of Ismâ'il's generous offer to double Egypt's tribute, the Porte bestowed upon him (1866 and 1873) the right of primogeniture for his family and the title of khedive,<sup>2</sup> which amounted almost to an acknowledgment of sovereignty. In 1879 a dual control by England and France was established over the land, and the khedive was deposed. Meantime the grievances of the army, which was officered mostly by Circassians, and of the peasantry, which suffered under heavy taxation, conscription and a system of corvée by which the government could force any able-bodied male to work for little or no pay on public projects often of doubtful utility, found a champion in an army officer, Ahmad 'Arabi, who was himself of peasant stock.<sup>3</sup> The insurrection was brought to a sudden end by the British victory at al-Tall al-Kabir (Tell el-Kebir) on September 13, 1882, and the banishment of 'Arabi.<sup>4</sup> The occasion provided the British with a chance to occupy the land which, however, remained under nominal Turkish suzerainty until shortly after the outbreak of the first World War, when England declared a protectorate over Egypt. The Khedive 'Abbas Hilmi was then deported and his uncle Husayn Kamil, with the title of sultan,

succeeded.<sup>5</sup> Fu'âd, who in 1917 followed his brother Husayn, was proclaimed malik (king) in February 1922, at which time the protectorate

was terminated, Egypt was declared independent and a constitution was promulgated. This concession by England was not made without struggle on the part of the natives. The nationalist leader, Sa'd Zaghlül, was a follower of 'Arabi and, like him, the son of a peasant, but more capable and more highly educated. In 1919 this fiery lawyer, a pupil of Jamâl-al-Dîn al-Afghâni and a former editor of al-Waqā' al-Misriyah under Muhammad 'Abduh,<sup>1</sup> sought permission from the British to leave the country with a delegation (wafd) to plead its cause before the Peace Conference in Paris and in London but was rebuffed and sent to Malta, an act which immediately made a national hero of him. His and his party's efforts were crowned with success when, in 1936<sup>2</sup> an Anglo-Egyptian treaty was signed stipulating the withdrawal of the British troops of occupation to the Canal zone, the relinquishing of British responsibility for the life and property of foreigners in favour of the Egyptian government and the rendition of reciprocal aid against enemies involving the use of ports, aerodromes and means of communication.

A bloodless military coup in 1952 dethroned Fu'âd's son, King Fârûq (Farouk), abolished the monarchy and led, in 1954, to a republic headed by Colonel Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir (Nasser), whose bold stand against Israeli, British and French invaders in 1956 raised him to the rank of a Pan-Arab hero. He has since introduced political and economic reforms of the socialistic type.

In the Arab Crescent political intervention took the form of mandates, with the British established in Palestine and al-'Iraq, and the French in Syria and Lebanon subsequent to the first World War. France's interest rested on economic

considerations, a policy of prestige as a counterbalance to British influence and *amitié traditionnelle* going back to Crusading days <sup>2</sup> and sanctioned by the capitulations granted by Sulaymân the Magnificent to Francis I.<sup>3</sup> It was French troops who, in 1860, were landed, with the consent of the great powers, on the Lebanese shore as a measure of security against further massacre.<sup>4</sup>

## French and British mandates

The administration of these mandates, termed class A, fell short of the ideal set in the covenant of the League of Nations that the well-being of the mandated peoples formed “a sacred trust of civilization” and that the chief concern of the mandatory power

<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. 753-5.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 594.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. above, p. 728.

<sup>4</sup> See above, pp. 735-6. was to provide such advice and assistance as might be necessary to achieve their full independence. Especially provoking were the grievances felt by the Syrians who charged French officials with employing the same colonial methods as in North Africa, use of the native government as a façade, failure to take cognizance of the rising national spirit, discouragement of the use of Arabic, depreciating the native currency by tying it to the franc, playing one party or sect against another and resorting to repressive measures involving espionage, imprisonment and exile.<sup>1</sup> Dividing the country into several *états* for administrative purposes and ceding the *sanjâq* of Alexandretta to Turkey on the eve of the second World War were other major complaints. Any benefits that might have accrued to the mandated territories by way of maintaining law and order, improving communications, widening areas of

cultivation, extending facilities of education and setting up the framework of a modern government and modernized society were not enough to stem the tide of rising discontent. Rebellion broke out in Jabal al-Durûz in July 1925. It soon spread to Damascus and neighbouring towns. The reaction thus set off did not cease until the last French troops were expelled in 1945 from Syrian soil. That was two years after Lebanon, which had started with amicable relations with the French mandate, had succeeded in freeing itself from it and proclaiming itself a republic.

Al-Traq had even earlier begun to pursue a hostile course against the British mandate. The rebellion of 1920, which started among the tribes on the lower Euphrates and in the holy cities of al-Najaf and Karbala',<sup>2</sup> led the British to substitute indirect for direct rule. Faysal, second son of King Husayn,<sup>3</sup> was crowned in August 1921 constitutional king over al-fIraq after occupying the improvised Syrian throne from March 8 to July 25, 1920. Several treaties followed, in one of the most important of which, that of

<sup>1</sup> George Antonius, Arab Awakening (Philadelphia, 1939), pp. 372-6; Albert H. Hourani, Syria and Lebanon (Oxford, 1946), pp. 176-8.

<sup>2</sup> Philip W. Ireland, 'Iraq-. A Study in Political Development (New York, 1938), pp. 266-76.

- ' Husayn of al-Hijaz

'Abdullah of Transjordan                      1. Faysal of al-\*Iraq (f 1933)

' I

2- Ghazi (f 1939)

### 3. Faysal II (b. 1935; '939"5<sup>S</sup>)

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December 1927, Britain recognized al-'Iraq as independent and entered into a twenty-five-year alliance with it. The treaty of June 1930 was decisive: Britain renounced its mandatory rights and recognized the full sovereignty of al-'Iraq.<sup>1</sup> Credit for this achievement should be given to the statesmanship of King Faysal I (1921—33), whose regime, however, became discredited under his second successor. In a military coup in 1958 Faysal II (1939-58) was slaughtered with his regent uncle and prime minister, and a socialist republic was established.

The Arab peoples at this time presented a seeming paradox: An resisting with one arm European advances while with the other <sup>EsrPtian</sup> receiving and adopting European ideas and techniques. The new <sup>reformaer</sup> acquisitions from Europe were utilized in the fight against Europeans. Of the numberless novel ideas imported from the West, nationalism and political democracy were undoubtedly the most powerful. The espousal of nationalism encouraged the principle of self-determination and both led to the struggle for independence from foreign rule. Meantime the new ideology from the West, with its stress on secular and material values and the importance it attaches to ethnic limitations and geographic boundaries, ran counter to the most cherished traditions of Islam, with its concepts of religious universality, political theocracy and exclusive sovereignty. Pan-Islam rather than Pan-Arabism would be the ideal toward which Moslems should strive. The conflict was on internal as well as external levels. In Egypt of the late nineteenth century the intellectual climate was rendered congenial for the reception and growth of the new concepts mainly through the writings

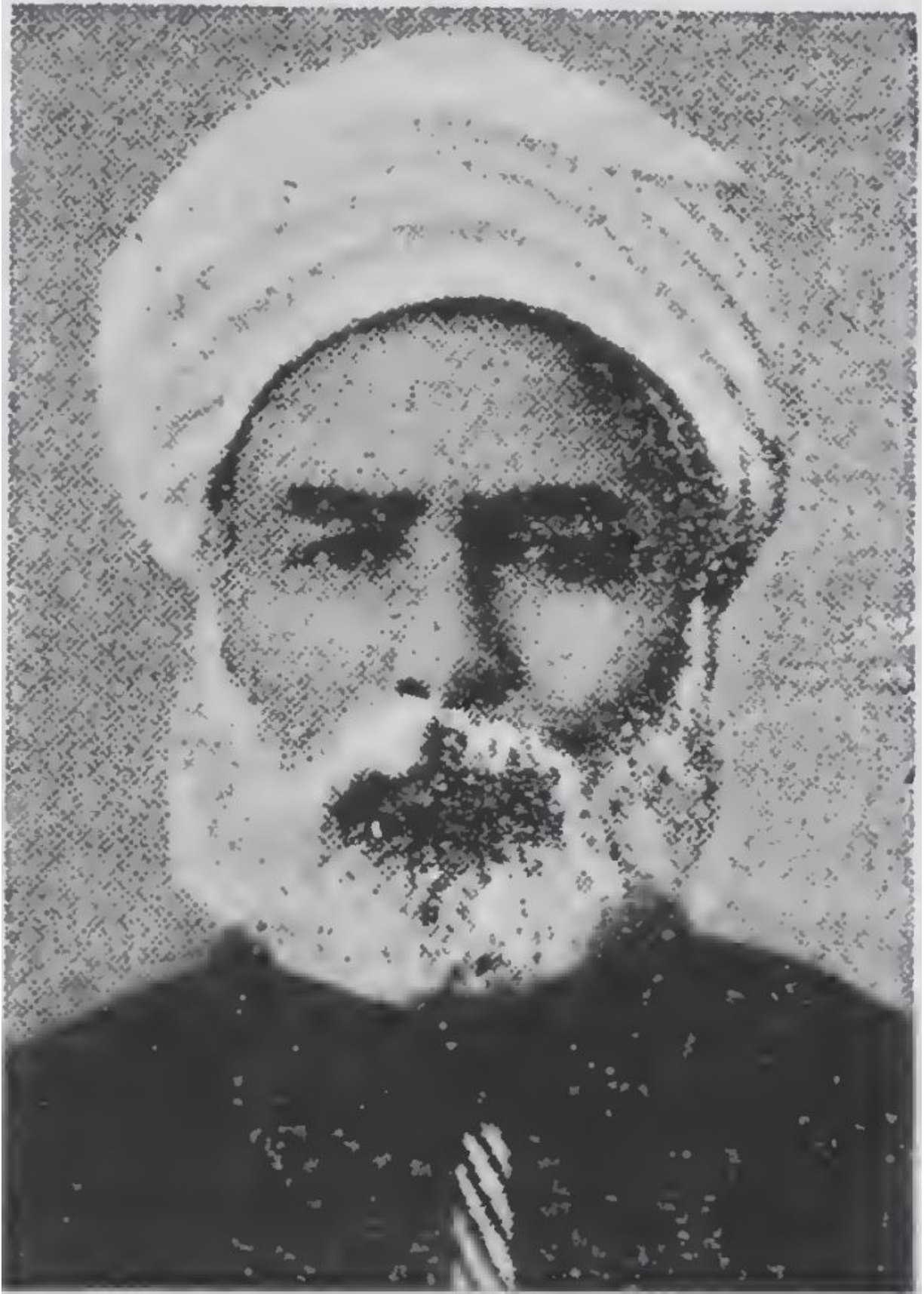
and speeches of the liberal reformer Muhammad 'Abduh (1849-1905), who rose to the highest religious position of his land, that of mufti. Muhammad 'Abduh had for teacher Jamal-al-Din al-Afghani (1839-97), the first chief agent in the inception of modernism in Islam.<sup>2</sup> Born in Afghanistan, Jamal-al-Din sojourned in India, Makkah and Constantinople before taking up his residence in Egypt, where he identified himself with the movement which culminated in the 'Arabi uprising <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ireland, pp. 409-18; for Arabic text of the treaty consult 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Hasani, *Tarikh al- Iraq al-Siyasi* (Baghdad, 1948), vol. ii, pp. 197-204.

<sup>2</sup> On modernism in Islam consult H. A. R. Gibb, *Modern Trends in Islam* (Chicago, 1945), pp. 39 seq.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 750. For more on Jamal-al-Din consult Charles C. Adams, *Islam and Modernism in Egypt* (London, 1933), pp. 4 seq. \ Zaydán, *Tarájim*, vol. ii, pp 5-; So.

Muhammad 'Abduh was exiled to Syria for complicity in this uprising. The decadent condition of Islam weighed heavily on his heart and mind. He followed ibn-Taymīyah<sup>6</sup> in the condemnation of superstitions and accretions that had contaminated the faith. His prescription embraced intellectual and political revivification of religion together with political unification under one supreme head The man who had studied and taught at al-Azhar and





## MUHAMMAD 'ABDUH, MODERN EGYPTIAN REFORMER

edited with *Tam al-Din* an Arabic paper in Paris, maintained 'that basically there was no conflict between Islam and science. He interpreted certain koranic passages rationally and recognized the insufficiency of Islamic scholasticism.<sup>7</sup> While Jamal-al-Din advocated political revolution, Muhammad 'Abduh advocated religious awakening to bring about reform. More than any other modern writers, these two contributed to the breaking of the scholastic shell which had encased Islam since medieval times. While neither achieved fully what he set out to do, yet both left an intellectual progeny which counted in its membership Qasim Amin (j- 1908), the first to attack vehemently polygamy, divorce

CH. lii CHANGING SCENE: IMPACT OF THE WEST 755 and the use of the veil<sup>8</sup> and Muhammad Rashid Rida (j\* 1935), born in al-Qalamun, North Lebanon, who went to Egypt in i^97> edited Muhammad Abduh's works,<sup>9</sup> wrote his biography and carried on in the magazine *al-Manar* his tradition. Reconstructing Arab society on a democratic political basis and reconciling Islam and the modern world remain the greatest tasks confronting the contemporary generation.

Arab nationalism started from a wide base—the thesis that all Nation^ Arabic-speaking peoples were one nation. It began as a purely <sup>ism</sup> intellectual movement having for pioneers mostly Syrian intellectuals, more specifically Christian Lebanese, educated at the American University of Beirut and operating in Egypt <sup>10</sup> Its early manifestations in the 1870s were revived interest in the Arabic classics and research in Islamic history. A consciousness of the past glory of the Moslem empire and of the brilliant cultural achievements of the Arabs suggested a future

possibility. Political awakening came in the wake of intellectual awakening. Political passivity gave way to political activity; for once in centuries change became a desideratum. Everywhere the movement fed upon resistance to Western imperialism.

Before long this nascent Pan-Arab movement was confronted with varied local problems. In Egypt the main hurdle was British occupation. Opposition to British rule began to absorb Egyptian interest. Then and there Egyptian nationalism was born, parting company with Arab nationalism and developing provincial aspects. Egypt for the Egyptians became the battle cry of the new order. With the further fragmentation of the Arab East, consequent upon the first World War, Arab nationalism suffered further fragmentation. In Syria it concentrated its force against the imposition of the French mandate. Lebanon, which was first favourably disposed toward the French mandate, became in the second World War equally bitter. Likewise in Palestine hostility to the British mandate and to its adjunct, political Zionism—which has since eventuated in the birth of Israel—generated a local type of national feeling. Even tiny Transjordan, which was amputated by the British in February 1921 from South Syria and

made a new state under the Amir 'Abdullah, developed a measure of nationhood of its own. Its creation was meant to appease 'Abdullah, who had resented the dethronement of his brother Faysal, and to act as buffer against the Bedouins. The amir became, in 1946, king of Transjordan and in 1949 head of the Hashimite Kingdom of Jordan {al-Mamlakah al-Urdunniyah al-Hashimiyah). A pronounced 'Iraqi nationalism was born in the 1920s largely as a reaction against British imperialism.

As nationalism struggled against foreign powers, political democracy contended with native feudalism. Liberty had internal as well as external opponents. Throughout the Arab East feudalism continued to be a dominant social feature with political complications. The system centred on chiefs who held power by virtue of descent and the accumulation of extensive land property. It was at first supported by a vassalage not of birth so much as by appointment, a hierarchy of muqatiji's^ as called in Lebanon and Syria, to whom taxes were farmed out and who exercised even penal powers. As these vassals acquired wealth, their office became hereditary, too. The institution and functioning of a democratic form of government against such a background was not an easy task. The search for a new political structure has not yet ended. Politically, no less than socially and economically, the entire Arab East is still in a state of transition.

#### Trend toward union

If the first World War severed the Arab components of the Ottoman empire and set them on the way to full or semi-nationhood, the second World War, combined with the threat of political Zionism, which was viewed by Arabs everywhere as an intrusive movement, contributed to bringing those parts closer together. Common interest and the rising feeling of solidarity found expression in the pact of the League of Arab States, signed in Cairo, March 1945. The pact indicates a firm intention to promote co-operation among member states in matters relating to education, trade and communication. It provides for consultation in case of aggression against any member state and forbids the use of force in settlement of disputes among them. To the membership of the League, consisting of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, al-Traq, Transjordan, Su'udi Arabia and al-Yaman,

were added the newly declared independent states of Morocco, Tunisia,

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 74Ó.

Libya, Sudan, al-Kuwayt and Algeria. A bloodless military coup in 1961 broke off the weak three-year-old chain connecting Syria with Egypt and forming the United Arab Republic. Al-Yaman, which had related itself loosely to the union, soon followed suit, and in the autumn of 1962 experienced another one of those military coups current in the Near East, aiming at replacing the imamate-kingdom by a republic with socialist leanings. The record in such coups is held by Syria, which in twenty years ending February 1966 experienced no less than thirteen coups— some unsuccessful. Of all the Arab republics of the area, Lebanon has been the most stable.

Originators of the third monotheistic religion, beneficiaries of the other two, co-sharers with the West of the Greco-Roman cultural tradition, holders aloft of the torch of enlightenment throughout medieval times, generous contributors to European renaissance, the Arabic-speaking peoples have taken their place among the awakened, forward-marching independent nations of the modern world. With their rich heritage and unmatched natural resource of oil, they should be able to make a significant contribution to the material and spiritual progress of mankind.

[1](#)

See above, pp. 727-8.

[2](#)

Per. khadiw, lord, ruler. For the Arabic text of the firman consult Zaydân, Tarikh Alisr, vol. ii, pp. 206-8.

[3](#)

For more on him consult Zaydân, Tarâjim, vol. i, pp. 229-52.

[4](#)

For a defence of the 'Arâbi case by an Englishman, consult Wilfrid S. Blunt, Secret History of the English Occupation of Egypt (New York, 1922), pp. 3<sup>2</sup>3'^3\*

[5](#)

' Consult table above, p. 726, n. 1.

[6](#)

Sec above, p. 689.

[7](#)

For more on him consult Muhammad Rashid Rida, Tarikh al-Ustadh al-Imam al-Shaykh Muhammad' ALduh, 3 vols. (Cairo, 1324); Adams, pp. 106-10.

[8](#)

His Tahrir al-Mar ah (emancipation of woman) (Cairo, 1316) was translated by O. Rescher into German (Stuttgart, 1928).

[9](#)

Chief among which was Tafsir al-Quran al-tfakim, 8 vols. (Cairo, 1346).

Antonius, pp. 79-86.

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Titles of books, as well as Arabic words and technical terms occurring in the text, in *italics* Initial letters of book-titles and of certain Oriental nouns capitalized.

Main references indicated in heavy type.

In pronouncing Arabic names the accent generally falls on the long vowel bearing the macron (-); the stands for a glottal stop; the ' for a <'e«p guttural that has no correspond, diphthongs ,Shl SUCH dotted CtterS 3S ' and f arC emphatically sounded; aw and ay are

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This classic history of the Arab peoples is a work of great thoroughness and insight which contains much to satisfy general readers as well as scholars. Here is the story of the rise of Islam in the Middle Ages, its conquests, its empire, its time of greatness and of decay, unrolling one of the richest and most instructive panoramas in history.

For this reissue of the tenth edition, Walid Khalidi gives a brief overview of the history and content of the book, and emphasizes the vital importance of Philip K. Hitti's magisterial and scholarly work to ongoing attempts to bridge the Arab/Western cultural divide.

Philip K. Hitti was born in Lebanon in 1886. From 1913 until his death in 1978, he lived for the most part in the USA, teaching first at Columbia and later at Princeton, from which he retired in 1954 as Professor of Semitic Literature and Chairman of the Department of Oriental Languages. The author of many works on Oriental subjects, Philip K. Hitti was active in numerous roles related to the study of Near East languages and politics, and to the promotion of international cultural organizations.

Walid Khalidi is one of the foremost scholars of the Arab world. Currently affiliated to the Institute for Palestine Studies, he was previously Research Fellow for Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University.



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Photograph: Expanse of empty sand dunes south of Zagora,  
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